

Saturday 20 February 2016

# Amateur Photographer

**Samyang 21mm f/1.4** **TESTED**  
A new manual-focus prime  
for mirrorless cameras



Passionate about photography since 1884

## Win BIG!

Judges and winners' top tips on how to triumph in the big photo competitions



## 100 years of Vogue

Beaton, Parkinson, Testino and other greats star in major retrospectives



## Sony A7R II

A tough test: shooting steam trains at night!



## Wing man

**Adrian Clarke** shares his wisdom from a lifetime photographing British birds

**NICK DANZIGER** Women of war • **LOCATION GUIDE** Norfolk's Holkham Bay

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A few weeks ago we followed motorsports photographer Nick Dungan as he took the Sony Alpha 7R II, a Metabones adapter and his Canon lenses to shoot an endurance race in Dubai (AP 16 January). This week Michael Topham sees how the camera's 42.4-million-pixel sensor copes with challenging low-light conditions while shooting steam trains at night. You may ask why we have followed up our usual review

with two field tests of the same camera. Well, while our lab tests let us look at certain details of the camera, we also like to see what it's like to use in specific situations. And we have been very impressed with the Sony Alpha 7R II and its advanced sensor in particular. In fact, we have been so impressed that it has just won the prestigious Product of the Year at the AP Awards. You can find out about all the award winners in next week's issue.

**Richard Sibley, deputy editor**

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## ONLINE PICTURE OF THE WEEK



## Shadow Play Under Surveillance

by Marcin Baran

Fujifilm X100T, 23mm, 1/500sec at f/7.1, ISO 200

"Shadow Play Under Surveillance" is Day 180 of my 365 Days Project,' explains Marcin. 'I take at least one shot a day and post it on Flickr. I try to find inspiration for my shots everywhere I go. I took this one on my way home. I passed this wall of a shopping centre, which was beautifully painted with shadows,

and instantly knew this was a great opportunity for a shot. After setting up the camera, I noticed in the corner of my eye two kids running. All it came down to was pressing the shutter button. This is an unusual photo for me because I am more of a "night photographer", but I really like to come back to this shot.'

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**Via our online communities** Post your pictures into our Flickr group, Facebook page, Twitter feed, or the gallery on our website. See details above.

**Transparencies/prints** Well-packaged prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 18.

## NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by Chris Cheesman

### Sony names winners

Fine-art photographers RongRong & Inri have won the Outstanding Contribution to Photography prize at this year's Sony World Photography Awards. The husband-and-wife team will be honoured for their 'significant impact on Asian photography' and for shaping contemporary photography at the Sony World Photography Awards ceremony on 21 April. Their work will go on show at Somerset House, London from 22 April-8 May.



SONY WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS

### Leica doubles cash prize

Leica has doubled the cash prize for best newcomer in this year's Oskar Barnack Awards to €10,000. Professional photographers and those under the age of 25 are urged to enter the awards, which offers the overall winner €25,000. Now in its 36th year, the awards will be open for entries from 1 March-15 April. Photographers should demonstrate powers of observation, and the relationship between man and the environment in a portfolio of up to 12 images. For full details visit [leica-oskar-barnack-award.com](http://leica-oskar-barnack-award.com).



### Bag maker honoured

US camera bag maker Think Tank Photo has won an award for services to press photography and technical prowess. Commenting on the J Winton Lemon Fellowship Award, given by the National Press Photographers Association, Think Tank CEO and head designer Doug Murdoch said: 'It is an extreme honour to be named for such an illustrious award.' To see the company's products, visit [www.thinktankphoto.com](http://www.thinktankphoto.com).

### Sony lightens load

Sony has launched a new line of USB storage devices, offering a read transfer speed of up to 130MB/s. The Sony USM-CA1 series is due out from this month in 16GB, 32GB and 64GB versions. 'The USB 3.1 Gen1 CA1-series utilises dual connectors, including the new standard Type-C USB, and Type-A, to broaden the usage abilities of the device,' Sony explained in a press statement. Prices start at £22.80.



SONY WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS



## WEEKEND PROJECT

### Keyword your images

If you shoot a lot of images, keeping track of your archives can be a tricky business. However, if you use a program like Lightroom, keywording can make life much easier in the long term. No longer is it like trying to find a needle in a haystack, as instead a quick search will reveal all the images associated with that keyword. Rate them at the same time and your highest-rated image will be at the top of the pile.

Best practice is to keyword as you go, but as it can be easily overlooked in the excitement of working up an image, you may have built up quite a stockpile of files that need your attention. If that's you, then now's the time to sit down and get started. It can be time-consuming, but it will certainly save you time in the long run.

Keywording in Lightroom can really help you to organise your images



### Nikon updates DSLRs

Nikon has released firmware updates for the D3300, D5500 and D5300. Firmware update 1.01 adds support for the AF-P DX Nikkor 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR and AF-P DX Nikkor 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G. Announced last month, the AF-P DX Nikkor 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR and AF-P DX Nikkor 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G are the first Nikkor lenses to boast Nikon's new stepping motor. Firmware improvements include the addition of an a5 manual-focus ring in AF mode to the custom setting menu of the D5500. Visit <http://downloadcenter.nikonimglib.com/en/index.html>.







# BIG picture

Jewish community celebrates the Tu B'Shvat, or New Year for Trees

◀ Getty photographer Menahem Kahana has found a playful take on an important date in the Jewish calendar. Tu B'Shvat can be translated as either 'Tree New Year' or 'New Year for Trees', and occurs on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat (this year the festival ran from sunset on 24 January until nightfall on 25 January). The day sees people planting trees, and eating from the so-called 'Seven Species' – wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates.

We see a lone child poking his head out of a sea of black. It's an image that we can all relate to, regardless of religion or creed, as we can recall a time when we were young, and easily distracted, at an event we didn't appreciate the significance of, whether it was a religious ceremony or a mandatory gathering of relatives.

## Words & numbers

*If you want to be a better photographer, stand in front of more interesting stuff*

**Jim Richardson,**  
American photojournalist



**1** You can begin by creating your own keywords. Lightroom will save them as a keyword list that you can apply to other images later, which saves you time in the future as you simply click on the keyword rather than type it in.

**2** Don't simply pick generic keywords like 'tree', 'beach' or 'coastline', but think about what the image conveys when you look at it. Think more along the lines of 'tranquil', 'calm', 'unsettled' or 'moody'.

**3** You don't have to keyword images one at a time. If you have multiple images taken at the same time or location, keyword one image and then select all files before clicking 'Sync Metadata' to apply to all.

**4** You can create keyword hierarchies when your list of keywords gets too long to manage easily. For a more structured list, keywords can be placed in subfolders – Lightroom will automatically apply the parent keywords.

**65%**

of the online photography community photocrowd.com are self-classified hobbyists and enthusiasts

# Plans to relocate RPS Collection spark outcry

THOUSANDS have signed a petition against the 'cultural asset-stripping' of West Yorkshire, following the announcement of plans to move the historic RPS Collection from the National Media Museum in Bradford to London.

The move to the V&A – expected to take place this summer – aims to create an international photography resource centre at the London museum, which already holds 500,000 photos and the 'single largest collection on the art of photography in the world'.

However, almost 25,000 people have backed a petition calling on the government to intervene and prevent the Science Museum Group (SMG) from relocating the 400,000-strong photographic archive.

'This is pure asset-stripping. It will endanger the long-term viability of the Bradford museum and further concentrate the nation's cultural treasures in an already grotesquely bloated capital', claims a petition launched on 38degrees.org by Neville Walker.

Among those against the proposal is Simon Cooke, leader of the Conservatives at Bradford Council who, in an open letter, wrote: 'We don't have much up here and it fills me with a kind of sad rage that you felt able to visit this bit of cultural rape on my city.'

Also lobbying against the move to the capital is Bradford South MP Judith Cummins.

Launching a petition on change.org, Cummins called on the government to 'stop the stealth move to downgrade our National Media Museum'.



There are 250,000 images in the RPS Collection

Cummins added: 'The National Media Museum is a hugely important part of the cultural offer, not just in Bradford and the region but for the nation as a whole.'

The RPS also expressed concern, saying the move will spell the loss of a 'national museum of photography' which, in the past, has been able to

focus on the science as well as the art of photography.

The RPS fears that the 'absence of a single institution with the curatorial expertise to collect and interpret all aspects of photography beyond its art will lead to a selective and narrow appreciation of photography'.

The V&A said its curators will work 'collaboratively with experts in all aspects of photographic history'.

A V&A spokesperson told AP: 'Bringing together this collection – which is around 10% of the SMG's total photography collection – with the V&A's collection will maximise its accessibility and logically reunite a divided national resource.'

'The V&A intends to create unprecedented opportunities for the public to see the collection...'

'The SMG will retain its science and technology photography collections, which number more than two million, for display in its museums.'



The photo on David Bellis's Facebook page

## Horse owner's 'rights' huff

A FAMILY self-portrait that was rudely photobombed by a grinning horse has been declared the rightful winner of a competition, despite a complaint that the horse's owner had not given permission for the shot.

David Bellis, from Prestatyn, Denbighshire, had entered the controversial photo showing Betty the horse in the 'Made Me Smile' competition run by Thomson Holidays.

Bellis said the photo – which caused a social media frenzy – was taken on a public footpath.

Captured by David's three-year-old son Jacob, the selfie went on to win top prize, prompting the horse's owner Nicola Mitchell to reportedly claim she had a right to a share of the £2,000 holiday.

However, Thomson said the result stands.



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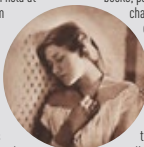
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## Historic photographic archive

DATING from 1827, the precious RPS Collection archive has been held at the National Media Museum (NMM) in Bradford since 2003, when the institution was called the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television.

Before then, it was kept at the RPS's base in Bath. As well as housing the world's oldest photographic negative, the RPS archive contains 8,000 pieces of

photographic equipment and 31,000 books, periodicals and documents, charting the invention and development of photography over the past 200 years. Once transferred to the V&A, the RPS Collection will be stored, digitised and 'made accessible for study'. Images from the Kodak Museum collection will be among those that will remain at the NMM.



# Sony Alpha 6300 CSC due in March



**SONY** is set to release a new compact system camera that includes a 24.2-million-pixel APS-C sensor, 425-point autofocus and internal 4K video recording.

The Alpha 6300 is an update to Sony's highly regarded Alpha 6000 compact system camera for enthusiast photographers.

It features a 24.2-million-pixel APS-C sensor, ISO 100–51,200, 11 frames per second continuous shooting, a 'silent shooting' function

and Bionz X processor.

A slower eight frames per second shooting mode includes live view between frames for easier tracking of moving subjects.

The Alpha 6300 boasts the world's fastest autofocus, with a lock-on time of 0.05sec and a 425-point phase-detection autofocus system that covers the entirety of its APS-C sensor – a significant advance over the impressive Alpha 6000.

Sony claims the camera is capable of activating a

large number of AF points to cover the subject of interest, and then automatically adjusting their coverage to match the subject as it moves around the frame.

Viewing is via either a 2.36-million-dot EVF, which now has a 120fps viewing mode, or a tilting 3in 921,600-dot LED (not touch-sensitive). Also on board is 4K recording at 100Mbps.

The Alpha 6300 is due in March, priced €1,250 (body only).

UK pricing is still to be confirmed.

## New Sony full-frame lenses

**COINCIDING** with news of the Alpha 6300 (above), Sony has announced a trio of premium 'G Master' lenses for its full-frame Alpha 7 system.

Comprising a 24–70mm f/2.8, an 85mm f/1.4 and a new flagship 70–200mm f/2.8 telephoto, the lenses form a new G Master series of optics.

Sony's move may please Alpha 7 owners seeking faster native zoom and prime optics. Yosuke Aoki, vice-president of digital imaging at Sony Europe, said: 'The new G Master brand represents the finest and most impressive group of lenses Sony has ever brought to market.'



The new 70–200mm, 24–70mm and 85mm are flagship lenses

UK prices have yet to be announced, but in Europe the 24–70mm f/2.8 and 85mm f/1.4 – both due out in March – are expected to be priced at €2,400 and €2,000, respectively.

The 70–200mm f/2.8 is due for release in May, although the price is yet to be confirmed. New 1.4x and 2x teleconverters are also due in May.

## Get up & go

The most interesting things to see, to do and to shoot. By Tom Smallwood



STIRLING

### Loch Ardrinning

If you happen to find yourself in the area, then why not head to Loch Ardrinning, a body of fresh water in Stirling? The area, managed by the Scottish Wildlife Trust, is host to many species of wildlife and an incredible landscape. This time of year is good for wildfowl and atmospheric winter conditions.

[scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/reserve/loch-ardrinning](http://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/reserve/loch-ardrinning)



WEST YORKS

### Jerwood/Photoworks Awards

The first national Jerwood/Photoworks Awards at the Impressions Gallery recognise future talent. This exhibition features the work of three awardees – Matthew Finn, Joanna Piotrowska and Tereza Zelenkova. Their mentors include Alec Soth and Gillian Weir.

Until 19 March, [www.impressions-gallery.com](http://www.impressions-gallery.com)



LONDON

### London Zoo Exhibition

Get your skates on to admire the images entered into the Zoological Society of London's fourth annual photography competition. The images in the exhibition were chosen by an eminent panel of judges. Entrance is free with standard admission to London Zoo.

Until 28 February, [www.zsl.org](http://www.zsl.org)



LIVERPOOL

### Photo walk

Photographer Aidan O'Rourke is offering a photo walk around the iconic city of Liverpool. The numbers are small – four to six people – and all levels of ability will be catered for. As well as lots of input from Aidan, there's a lesson in exposure and a free 'crib card'.

28 February, text or phone 07779 290 082 for details



EDINBURGH

### Wet-plate collodion workshop

John Brewer is teaching this time-honoured technique at the Stills Gallery. You should have some darkroom experience and will learn both the scientific and artistic methods involved in the wet-plate process.

5 March, [www.johnbrewerphotography.com](http://www.johnbrewerphotography.com)

For the latest news visit [www.amateurphotographer.co.uk](http://www.amateurphotographer.co.uk)

# Viewpoint Tony Kemplen

The beautifully compact Kowa Komaflex-S can once again see the light of day, thanks to the reappearance of 127 film supplies



**B**ack in 2012 I wrote a feature lamenting the passing of 127 film, 100 years after its introduction. At the time this was accurate, but I'm delighted to say that limited supplies of the format are available once more – although it doesn't come cheap at around £10 a roll.

My fondness for 127 cameras stems from their compact size. They are often little brothers to well-known models with names such as the Baby Rolleiflex, the Baby Ikonta and even the Baby Brownie. The Komaflex-S looks like a scaled-down version of the Kowa Six, a squarish waist-level SLR, sometimes known as the poor man's Hasselblad. In fact, the larger version came several years after this 127 camera, which was made around 1960.

The camera poses a few puzzles, not least its name. The Kowa Camera Company produced at least 20 cameras with 'Kowa' in the title, yet for some reason this one has 'Komaflex' instead. Was this a simple mistake in the transfer from drawing board to factory floor or was there some logic behind it? The puzzle continues when the camera is put to use. I've handled many cameras and most are intuitive to use, but the Komaflex certainly isn't. The mechanism is delicate and intricate, and the instruction manual repeatedly emphasises the importance of following the correct sequence of actions and not using undue force at any stage. This is one of the few cameras where I actually felt the need to take the instructions with me



Tony's late father holding a Contarex 'Bullseye'

when I went out shooting, as it would seem that a number of cameras have been broken by getting the controls muddled up.

It's quite a novelty to have a rollfilm SLR that sits comfortably in the palm of your hand, so it was no hardship taking it out and about once I'd loaded it with a roll of Efke 100 black & white film. I found that the worry about doing things in the wrong order and wrecking the camera detracted somewhat from the pleasure of using it. The Seikoshia-SLV leaf shutter performed well at all speeds, which range from 1sec to 1/500sec, while the 65mm f/2.8 Prominar lens is nice and crisp, and would certainly be up to the task of making Superslides, the 4x4cm transparencies that the manufacturers pushed in their marketing of the Komaflex.

I shot a range of subjects, including my dad (above). He was a skilled, self-taught repairman and could strip down and service a leaf shutter in short order. He died recently and I wish he was around now, as after a couple of years on the shelf the Komaflex-S shutter has stopped working. He could probably have fixed it for me.

Tony Kemplen's love of photography began as a teenager and ever since he has been collecting cameras with a view to testing as many as he can. You can follow his progress on his 52 Cameras blog at [52cameras.blogspot.co.uk](http://52cameras.blogspot.co.uk). You can also see more photos from the Komaflex-S at [www.flickr.com/photos/tony\\_kemplen/sets/72157625223152188](http://www.flickr.com/photos/tony_kemplen/sets/72157625223152188)



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## New Books

The latest and best books from the world of photography. By Oliver Atwell



### Marc Riboud

by Marc Riboud, Thames & Hudson, paperback, £9.95, 144 pages, ISBN 978-0-50041-111-7



MARC Riboud has been a member of the esteemed Magnum photo agency for around three decades. Looking through the images in this book, it's not difficult to see the mutual attraction between photographer and agency. Riboud's black & white reportage fits seamlessly into the

agency's documentary ethos. Riboud's work takes us on a whirlwind tour of the world and its history. In this volume, Riboud's eye guides us across the political geography of places such as China, Vietnam and Bangladesh, and we find ourselves in the grip of a man who is caught between the idea of being repelled by war and violence, and the overwhelming compulsion to document it, to learn what drives our desire for conflict. The book reproduces 62 images and each one tells a vital narrative. Also worth noting is Riboud's own introduction to the book, which places the images, as well as himself, in a crucial context. ★★★★★

### Water

by Bernhard Edmaier, Prestel, hardback, £45, 224 pages, ISBN 978-3-79138-165-7



FROM above, our Earth can seem like an undiscovered land, a territory consisting of alien terra firma, with colours and shapes that look almost unreal. Bernhard Edmaier is a photographer who has a natural talent for seeking out the most

beautiful corners of our world and capturing them from the air, all in an attempt to show us just how astonishing the planet is. Here, Edmaier mixes things up by showing us visions from both the air and the ground, and hones his eye into its most vital element: water. We find that the very thing we take for granted has both the power to sustain and the power to destroy. Even away from the heady themes, the images themselves are works of magnificent beauty. Edmaier has travelled extensively for this body of work and as a result we have a captivating portrait of our home. ★★★★★

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## Landscape Photographer of the Year



Take a view – Landscape Photographer of the Year was founded in 2006 by well-known British landscape photographer Charlie Waite (left), with a total prize fund of £20,000. The organisers also publish a book of the best

entries and host an exhibition. Its sister competition, USA Landscape Photographer of the Year, is also well supported. 'It's impossible to say what catches the judges' eye and what doesn't – I couldn't say, "Go and do this and you will win", says Waite. 'One year, a little dog at the end of a pier won it, another [year] it was a stunning landscape of the Old Man of Storr in Skye. We used to get a lot of images of sunsets and sunrises, long exposures with glassy water and boulders, but now there is a huge variety.'

That said, Waite reckons the most successful entries adopt Ansel Adams' maxim, 'recognition and previsualisation' – recognising the essential aspects of a landscape, evoking a concept and then anticipating the final image before shooting. 'It's about bringing recognition and previsualisation together, and thinking about the story about you are trying to tell,' Waite notes.

As with most judges we spoke to, Waite counsels against over-processing, and notes that entries from the USA in particular have a tendency to be a 'bit too colourful'. Sensitive composition and cropping are also crucial, and it's vitally important for entrants to avoid common technical pitfalls, such as lack of sharpness and blown-out highlights (although Waite notes that the latter is not such of an issue in high-contrast black & white images).

[www.take-a-view.co.uk](http://www.take-a-view.co.uk)



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In travel photography, avoid simply 'stamp collecting' and aim for a unique image

© JEFFREY M. HARRIS

## Travel Photograph



Another popular international competition is Travel Photographer of the Year, founded by professional photographer Chris Coe (left) and his partner Karen in 2003.

'We started out getting entries from 30 different countries and now it's over 100,' he explains. 'A big mistake is to assume that you only stand a chance of doing well if you enter images taken in very exotic destinations. We reflect travel trends, and travel to far-flung places has never been easier or cheaper, but actually the competition needs more pictures of the UK and Europe.'

# Win big in 2016

Are you contemplating entering a photography competition this year, but are unsure how to approach it? Judges and winners from some of the UK's most prestigious contests share their secrets for success

**O**ver the past decade, there has been an explosion in the number of photography competitions. In addition to the well-established genre-based contests, such as Travel and Wildlife Photographer of the Year, more and more organisations and businesses have realised that setting up a competition

is a good way to create awareness and positive PR. Everyone, from the Royal College of Nursing and the National Trust to scientific and industrial bodies, is running themed contests, and websites like [www.photocontestinsider.com](http://www.photocontestinsider.com) exist to tell people about them. Competitions have become money-making exercises, too, as many now charge you to enter.

While some entrants may begrudge having to cough up, winning a prestigious award can be a fantastic way for enthusiast photographers to raise their profile, so it could be money well spent. To boost your chance of success in 2016, we've spoken to judges and winners from some of the biggest and most popular contests to get their insights and tips.



Try to have an image in your head before you fire the shutter

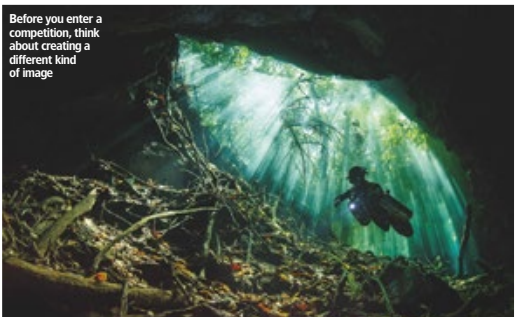
## her of the Year

We need interesting pictures of more familiar places, in other words, think of where everyone is *not* going and get some images from there. We tried to tweak the rules to prevent so many Buddhist-monk pictures one year, but still they came!

Joking aside, Coe's point is picked up by Philip Lee Harvey, crowned winner of the 2014 competition. 'People think if they go somewhere amazing, they will come back with amazing pictures. Well, yes and no. Will they be different and reveal what *you* want to see, or you are simply "stamp collecting" from that destination?'

[www.tpoty.com](http://www.tpoty.com)

Before you enter a competition, think about creating a different kind of image







## Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year

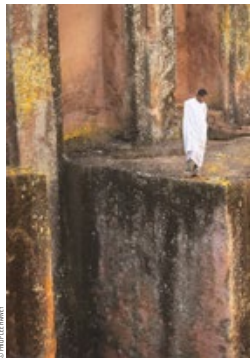


 Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year has grown exponentially, attracting 20,000 entries since its inception in 2011, as well as some big-name judges including food critic Jay Rayner and AP editor Nigel Atherton. According to judge Elizabeth Galbraith (left), 'Following fashion and trends is a big mistake that entrants make. Sometimes it looks as though holiday snaps have been submitted. If you're entering something shot on the hoof then it has to be exceptional.'

David Griffen, overall winner of the 2015 competition (see image above), reveals the planning behind his success. He explains, 'This was the third time I'd entered, and I thought, "Right, let's treat this like any other job". So I wrote my own brief, starting by researching previous winners and trying to find a theme. I felt the competition very much leaned towards food and travel, so I decided to go out to Asia rather than raiding my back catalogue. I shot specifically for the contest, spending ten days in Malaysia and combining it with a client meeting.'

[www.pinkladyfoodphotographeroftheyear.com](http://www.pinkladyfoodphotographeroftheyear.com)

### TELLING A STORY



© DAVID GRIFFEN



DAVID GRIFFIN

© JEFFREY HARRIS/ALAMY PHOTOGRAPHY LTD. FOR THE BATES



Originality and freshness are keys to capturing the eye of the judges

## Wildlife Photographer of the Year



Now in its 51st year, WPOTY is one of the oldest UK-based competitions, and is organised by the Natural History Museum. According to Roz Kidman Cox (left), a member of the judging panel, originality and freshness of vision go a long way to help you get

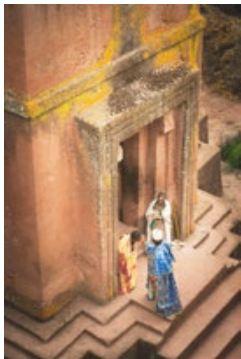
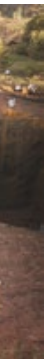
shortlisted. 'It's surprising how many people copy compositions that have done well in the past, and that includes photographing the same subjects in the same places,' she reflects. 'Keep in mind that

pictures are judged anonymously and without the backstories – a picture must stand on its own artistic merits, without words.

Also, the judges can only select from what is entered, and unfortunately, few people take original compositions featuring familiar subjects, despite the fact that there are a lot of familiar species that haven't been photographed well or often, and that includes plants. The advantage lies with those who decide to concentrate on new ways of seeing the familiar.'

[www.wildlifephotographeroftheyear.com](http://www.wildlifephotographeroftheyear.com)

It was third time lucky for David Griffin, the 2015 winner of Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year



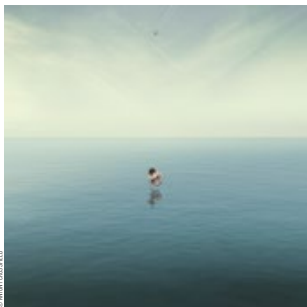
Philip Lee Harvey's portfolio won him Travel Photographer of the Year in 2014



Depending on the competition rules, you might need to enter a portfolio of images, and this is an area where many entrants fall down. 'Often you get three great images and a filler,' says Chris Coe of Travel Photographer of the Year. 'Interestingly, younger photographers seem better at shooting to a brief. It's always a good idea to get a fresh pair of eyes to check your portfolio before submitting.' Again, this point is echoed by the 2014 winner Philip Lee Harvey (see images left): 'For portfolios, you need to have a continuity of a style and approach. It's not enough to submit odd, random shots – they need to have been thought through as a narrative.'

Thinking in terms of a portfolio can be hard if you are mainly used to doing standalone shots, but ask yourself whether the narrative of the sequence is strong enough to come over without the need for captions. Another good tip is to do prints of 'possibles' from your unedited portfolio and hang them around the house. You might get fresh insights into the image choice and order after looking at them for a few days.

## PROCESSING GUIDELINES



© JASON TROSBY

The nature of the competition you enter will determine the policy on image editing and manipulation, so you must read the rules carefully. There have been several high-profile disqualifications for excessive tweaking in contests that insist on accurate depictions of reality, and the policy of Wildlife Photographer of the Year is typical. 'The rules clearly state that no manipulation is allowed beyond in-camera settings and normal processing – certainly no additions or removals,' says judge Roz Kidman Cox. 'But, of course, some people don't read the rules and a few try to break them. This is why finalists are asked to submit their raw files (or original negatives if a scan of a print) so comparisons can be made and photographs that have been over-processed and break the rules are disqualified.'

Interestingly, even in competition categories where digital manipulation is allowed, more 'realistic' images often succeed over those that have been heavily processed. A good example is 'Bomb' (above), Antony Crossfield's image of a man bomb-diving into the sea, which won the Enhanced category in the 2015 Sony World Photography Awards. 'Lots of my work involves complex post-production, but this was done in a subtle way,' he explains. 'It didn't look like Photoshop grandstanding and people still ask me how I shot it!'

© JAMES TREV

## Insight Astronomy Photographer of the Year



With astrophotography more popular than ever, it's no surprise that this contest, co-organised by the Royal Observatory Greenwich, attracts an astronomical number of entries. 'I have been a judge since 2009, and the thing that really gets judges is the initial "Wow!" moment when you first see a great entry,' says astronomer and judge Dr Marek Kukula (above). He continues: 'So we're talking about great colour, composition, and a really interesting science angle and story.' Kukula also reckons clichéd images and over-processing are a big turn-off. 'Some processing is OK and we are not draconian about it, but really garish colours in the aurora borealis, for example, stick out,' he reveals. Kukula is also keen to emphasise that potential entrants shouldn't rule themselves out if they don't have any jaw-dropping vistas of distant galaxies – as you can see from the winning images from previous years, a wide variety of approaches are welcomed. [www.rmg.co.uk](http://www.rmg.co.uk)

The quality of entries to APOY gets better every year




© NICK NUTT

## APOY ahoy!



Of course, no article on competitions would be complete without mentioning Amateur Photographer of the Year (APOY), the UK's most prestigious contest for amateurs. 'APOY has been running for nearly two decades and it's quite astonishing seeing the quality of images that flood in,' notes judging panel member Oliver Atwell (above). 'It just goes to show that amateur photographers can easily compete with professionals. If you look at the Sony World Photography Competition, the Open (amateur) category stomps all over the Professional category. Amateurs haven't been infected with all the restraints, both technical and theoretical, that can restrict professionals.'



2015's Astronomy  
Photographer of the  
Year Aurora winner  
was Jamen Percy  
with 'Silk Skies'

So why do a lot of entries fail to get shortlisted? 'We often see the same old scenes,' he says. 'Also, and I can only speak for myself, I tend to go for images that are a little ambiguous in nature, images that feel almost like they're part of a mystery. I want to look closer and explore, allowing a kind of narrative to develop, drinking in the atmosphere and letting my mind explore the possibilities. This is probably because I come from an art background, whereas a lot of the other judges are professional photographers and have years of understanding of how to take the perfect landscape. Our differing approaches create a nice balance, so we have a pretty even spread of styles throughout the competition.'

**Details of APOY 2016 will be announced online on 1 March and in AP 5 March**



Lee Acaster, last  
year's APOY  
winner, submitted  
some stunning  
entries

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## LETTER OF THE WEEK



### Glorious mud

One weekend recently I had a spare afternoon and thought I'd head to the Dorset coast. Before I left AP popped through the door, and inside was Mark Bauer's *Location Guide* to Dancing Ledge (AP 6 February). It was a new location for me, so, taking my copy of AP with me, off I went. I've admired Mark's work for some time and his pictures accompanying the article were stunning.

The instructions got me there easily, but after all the recent rain the fields were knee-deep in mud and parts of the 'walk down the hill' were near vertical. Due to the conditions it didn't take long before I took an accidental shortcut down one of the steepest bits on my derrière! Muddled but not defeated, on I went. There was no golden light as in Mark's

photos, but I passed a happy few hours trying to capture the textures in the retreating waves over rock ledges (see above). The place was quite busy with visitors and they must have wondered what some middle-aged bloke covered in mud was doing! So, thank you AP, and Mark, for the inspiration, but if I bump into you, Mark, I'll need to have a word about the mud!

**Geoff Kell, Hampshire**

**Don't talk to me about the mud down there! As an inquisitive child I once got caught in the mud of the Jurassic Coast while looking for fossils. Due to struggling to get my sinking feet out, I ended up waist-deep in mud and needed my parents to pull me out! – Richard Sibley, deputy editor**



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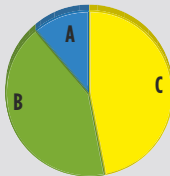
### Weighty issue

I had to give up my Nikon D7100 because it had become too heavy for me to use comfortably. I replaced it with a D3300 at almost half the weight. However, in Michael Topham's article on the Nikon D5 and D500 (*First*

*Look*, AP 30 January), there is no mention of weight. For my age group (mid-70s), all other detail is irrelevant if one cannot hold the camera.  
**Ivan Strahan, Co Down**

**The rise of mirrorless cameras and the filtering**

**down of advanced technology from enthusiast DSLRs to entry-level models means there's never been a better selection of lightweight cameras boasting impressive specifications to choose from. I**



### In AP 30 January, we asked...

Would you lend your camera to a friend?

#### You answered...

A Yes	11%
B Maybe, it depends on the friend	42%
C No	47%

#### What you said

'Obviously it depends on the friend: some people I'd be happy to trust, but I've known others I wouldn't risk lending a crowbar to because they'd probably break it'

'Many years ago, I lent my new Ensign Selfix 16-20 rangefinder to a friend to take with him on holiday. It never came back – he dropped it in the Thames. He hadn't mentioned the holiday was a river cruise'

'I've lent my sister a compact when we both went on the same holiday. She knows nothing about photography, but still took some pictures that were better than mine. Can't have that!'

'I am rarely without my camera, so it would be a problem for me to lend it to someone for any reasonable period of time. I do allow others to try the camera, but a longer-term loan, probably not'

**Join the debate on the AP forum**

#### This week we ask

Have you ever injured yourself while taking photos?

Vote online [www.amateurphotographer.co.uk](http://www.amateurphotographer.co.uk)



## Tweet of the week

This week's Tweet of the Week comes from our @AP\_Magazine account. Taken at our recent Amateur Photographer Awards 2016, it shows all of this year's winners. Well done everyone!



All our lovely @APMagazine2016 Winners in one place! Congratulations to you all!



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sympathise with your predicament and the fact the Nikon D3300 is around 40% lighter than the Nikon D7100 is good reason for your change in camera. The recently announced Nikon D500 and D5 sit at the top of Nikon's respective DX-format and FX-format line-ups and have been designed with the very best build quality in mind for serious enthusiasts and working pros. The Nikon D500 is approximately 20% larger and 20% heavier than the Nikon D7100, weighing 860g (body only). In comparison, the Nikon D5 weighs a mighty 1,415g (body only). This works out at nearly 1kg heavier than your current D3300. If you find the weight of the D7100 is uncomfortable for you, the Nikon D500 and D5 won't be any more suitable. I apologise for not including the weight of both cameras in my article, but hopefully you are now better informed – Michael Topham, deputy technical editor

## Family friendly

On a winter walking holiday in the Swiss Alps, my wife and I stopped at a mountain restaurant. There were lots of families with small children present, and we sat on an



Malcolm Gee's candid picture, taken in Switzerland

outdoor terrace among them. When I got my camera out to take some candid photographs, nobody took any notice and had no objection to what I was doing. What a refreshing attitude compared with what probably would have happened in similar circumstances in the UK! I now have some lovely images of a very 21st century young lady enjoying a game of cards. Malcolm Gee, Norfolk

You will notice different attitudes to photography if you travel frequently. Documentary shots of people are often treated with far less suspicion in different places – Richard Sibley, deputy editor

## Pen-F impressions

I was interested in your article on the new Olympus Pen-F and the footnote on the original 1963 Pen-F (AP, 6 February). I went to one of the launch events for the 2016 version, where a presenter referred to the shape, differing as it does from the OM-D series with dummy pentaprism housing, as 'rangefinder style'.

This does the original 1960s design an injustice, because it was a true SLR camera. The lack of the traditional roof prism housing was not only because of the ingenious Porro prism, but also because the half-frame format was rotated by 90° from that of a full-frame 35mm camera. When the camera was held horizontally the portrait format applied, and for a landscape shot the photographer would hold the camera vertically. To have a prism mounted in the top-plate in the traditional way would have made little sense, and the neat, clean shape of the Pen-F came about. Adrian Johnson, Surrey

It certainly is a nice-looking camera, although we think it bears more of a resemblance to the Leica III cameras than the original Pen-F – Richard Sibley, deputy editor

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# AP Award winners

We reveal the top products from the past year

## Natural-light portraits

Two very different photographers share their tips for shooting with natural light

## Winter warmers

Landscape photographer Dan Cook looks at the best ways to make the most of those miserable winter conditions

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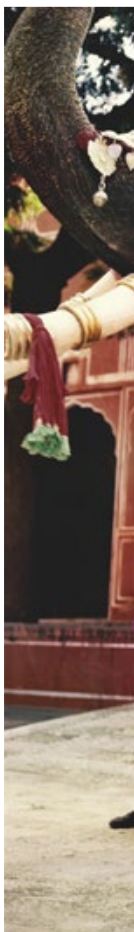
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## 'Anne Gunning in Jaipur' by Norman Parkinson, 1956

► Anne Gunning was a fashion model in the 1950s and this image was taken during the fashion team's first shoot in India. 'Norman Parkinson is a photographer *Vogue* can sort of call its own,' says Muir. 'He worked a little for other magazines, but *Vogue* took him on around 1942 and he shaped the way the magazine looked until the 1960s. I think this photograph is an extraordinary and beautifully balanced colour image. You get all the colour of India in that photograph.'

## 'The Second Age of Beauty is Glamour' by Cecil Beaton, 1946

◀ 'Beaton began his *Vogue* career in 1924, and his association with the magazine lasted until the end of the 1970s, shortly before his death,' says Muir. 'His pictures were mostly highly artifice-infused black & white work, but he was also very adept at using colour. This photograph features a red ensemble by designer Norman Hartnell and the colours are stunning. It's not a well-known Beaton shot, but I hope it's one that people will come away remembering. We couldn't find out the model's name, but we're hoping someone will come to the exhibition and tell us who it is.'



# Style & substance

On the eve of two centenary exhibitions showcasing the best of British *Vogue* photography, curator **Robin Muir** of the National Portrait Gallery talks **David Clark** through its history

**T**he world of fashion is continually changing and evolving, but some constants remain. One of them is British *Vogue*, for many people the perennial go-to style bible. This year marks a century since its first appearance on the nation's newsstands.

It's been published continuously since autumn 1916, when US *Vogue's* proprietor, Condé Montrose Nast, was facing problems exporting the magazine to the UK due to wartime shipping restrictions. His solution was to create a separate British version. Since then, it has developed a

unique place in British cultural life.

Over the past century, *Vogue* has featured the work of celebrated international designers including Dior, Chanel and Mary Quant, worn by supermodels of the day such as Twiggy, Jean Shrimpton, Christy Turlington, Kate Moss and Naomi Campbell. As two new exhibitions



show, a wealth of great images has been specifically created for the magazine's pages.

One exhibition at London's Eleven gallery is called *Elegance in Vogue* (see page 26) and takes a thorough look at Norman Parkinson's contribution to the esteemed publication. The second, a major

retrospective called *Vogue 100: A Century Of Style*, exhibits at the National Portrait Gallery and takes a much broader view. The NPG exhibition is curated by former *Vogue* picture editor Robin Muir, who has had a 30-year association with the magazine and is an authority on its history. The

material took five years to assemble, but it's a task that Muir relished.

"This is an opportunity for me to show *Vogue's* greatest hits," he says. "People will see famous photographs such as Horst P Horst's "Mainbocher Corset" image and George Hoyningen-Huene's "Bathers", as well as less

STYLING: MICHELLE WILSON; MAKEUP: ASSIETTES; HAIR: LUCIANA; PROPRIETOR: J. D.



## 'Kate Moss at the Master Shipwright's House, Deptford' by Mario Testino, 2008

► Moss, the evergreen supermodel who made her first appearance on a *Vogue* cover in 1993, is shot here by Mario Testino. 'To my mind, Mario is one of the giants of late-century fashion photography in Britain,' says Muir. 'There's an exuberance to his work, an exultation in the sheer glory and fun of fashion photography, which resonates with people and is an important element in the magazine. He's an enormously important figure and I think that will come out in the exhibition.'

► familiar images. I hope the journey through the magazine's history will show people pictures they recognise and ones they didn't know before.'

The roll call of photographers whose work has been published in the magazine is impressive. As well as Horst and Hoyningen-Huene, in the magazine's early decades contributors included Edward Steichen, Cecil Beaton and Man Ray. After the Second World War, *Vogue* reflected a new age in fashion with work by Norman Parkinson, Helmut Newton, David Bailey and Lord Snowdon.

In more recent years, a new generation of photographers such as Mario Testino, Nick Knight, Patrick Demarchelier, Corinne Day and Juergen Teller have reinvented fashion photography in their own distinctive ways.

'These are the great names, not just of *Vogue's* history, but of photography in the modern age,' Muir continues. '*Vogue* has attracted such extraordinary talent. All the famous names are there, plus some who have slipped from view.'

### Wider cultural life

However, Muir is keen to stress that from its earliest years *Vogue* has always been more than simply a fashion magazine and has reflected and embraced wider cultural life. 'It's not just about clothes and frivolity,' says Muir, 'it's about world events in some instances.'

*Vogue* has always featured portraits as well as pin-ups, and it has included a surprisingly diverse range of famous people in its pages. They include writers Dylan Thomas, Sir John Betjeman and Martin Amis, film directors David Lean and Alfred Hitchcock, public



'These are the great names, not just of *Vogue's* history but of photography in the modern age'

figures including Princess Diana and Margaret Thatcher, musicians David Bowie and The Beatles, and comedians Peter Sellers and Morecambe & Wise.

*Vogue* has also covered the major historical events of its time. During the Second World War, for example, the magazine had its own war correspondent, Lee Miller. 'She was a model, then a fashion photographer, then a photojournalist,' says Muir. 'She sent back pictures of front-line action, the concentration camps

at Dachau and Buchenwald, and even beat the American army to Hitler's apartment. With Miller, *Vogue* had a ringside seat at some of the most resonant events of the war.'

Muir concedes that there's some truth in the criticism that the magazine has historically been aimed at a mainly wealthy, and mainly white, readership, but says that has changed. 'When Condé Nast bought *Vogue* in 1909, he consciously aimed it at the Manhattan social elite to make money,' he says.

'Since then, there's been a



perception that *Vogue* is aiming for a certain moneyed stratum, but that's not so much the case now. It's for everybody. There's as much emphasis on affordable high-street clothes as on high fashion.'

Muir also points out that British *Vogue* was the first-ever mainstream magazine to put a black model on the cover: Donyale Luna, shot by David Bailey in 1966.

'The magazine has always had a slightly schizophrenic quality,' Muir continues, 'in the sense that it wants to reflect what's happening in wider

cultural life, but it also wants to sell dreams and appeal to people with money who want to buy things.'

#### Exhibition selection

The Condé Nast archive is estimated to hold more than a million images, so how did Muir select the 280 prints in the exhibition? 'It was alternately a wonderful experience and also a rather desperate one,' he admits. 'What do you choose to leave out? It's very difficult when you're confronted by deciding

#### 'Charlie Chaplin in New York' by Edward Steichen, 1926

▲ Chaplin was one of the world's most famous film stars, at the top of his game when Steichen's studio portrait was made. The low-angled light casts his shadow on a white board, suggesting a cinema screen. 'Steichen didn't really like photographing celebrities,' says Muir, 'but he said that Chaplin was his favourite subject because he was animated and interesting and not like the average vain film star. He photographed him several times.'







between which Man Ray picture to include. You want both because they're both extraordinary, but you have to make choices.

'Ultimately, every photograph was chosen first and foremost because it's a great photograph. It's fine if it shows an unknown person. There's nobody in this show who is there because we felt they ought to be there. There are many famous people from the past century who have appeared in the magazine but who aren't represented because the photographs aren't good enough.'

### Back in time

One problem Muir had to overcome was that the British *Vogue* archive doesn't extend back a full century, but instead only goes back to 1943. That's because in 1942 there was a drive for people to recycle paper for the war effort. The magazine took a lead and pulped virtually its entire photographic archive, including countless prints.

'That decision makes a point about how photography at the time was perceived in the commercial world,' says Muir. 'It was there for a purpose, to illustrate something, but intrinsically was considered

worthless. Luckily, US *Vogue* didn't pulp its archive, so we've been able to borrow lots of prints and other objects from them and we can cover a full century in the exhibition.'

The show itself is an entertaining selection of fashion and portrait images that encapsulates the myriad changes in culture, society and style over the past century. However, it's not all rows of beautifully framed photographs. At times it reflects how the images were regarded as simply magazine illustrations and shows them with creases, tears and art directors' crayon markings. The show is also organised with a reverse chronology: it starts with present-day images and ends at the beginning.

'As *Vogue* is still a living-and-breathing entity with new issues coming out, we decided to start with today and take you on a journey back through time to when it all started in 1916,' explains Muir. 'We go from large and very colourful prints by today's photographers, right back to beautiful 5x4in or 10x8in black & white prints from the 1920s. Those earlier images are very powerful because of their scale, the traditional chemicals used and the fact that they sing out. I think it works rather well.'

### Norman Parkinson and *Vogue*

There is also a chance to view a nice selection of Norman Parkinson's images (see above and below) at the Eleven gallery in London. In a career that spanned over five decades, Parkinson photographed for *Vogue* most of this time. He worked consistently for British *Vogue* from 1941-1960, and after a stint at *Queen*, returned again in 1965, working with British *Vogue* until 1975. His long association with *Vogue* brought him worldwide recognition and he is now considered one of the 20th century's foremost fashion photographers. Parkinson's images are on show until 24 March, and are a perfect complement to the NPG show.



*Vogue* 100: A Century of Style is at the National Portrait Gallery, London WC2H 0HE, until 22 May, sponsored by Leon Max. [www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk). Elegance in *Vogue* is at the Eleven Gallery, London SW1W 9LX, until 24 March. [www.elevenfineart.com](http://www.elevenfineart.com)





# Avian adventures



**Adrian Clarke** has dedicated much of his life to photographing the birds of Britain. He talks to **Oliver Atwell** about the techniques that help him capture the majestic beauty of these common creatures

**O**ne of the most satisfying aspects of photography is that moment when you finally find your niche. Starting out, a quick glance through your portfolio will reveal myriad styles and genres all vying for the viewer's attention. However, as time goes on a photographer will begin gradually to whittle down their interests and focus their attention on the genre that most appeals. For some it's street photography, for others landscapes. But there are many who find themselves falling into the infinite rewards of wildlife photography, a genre

that can help bring a person much closer to the natural world.

One such individual is Stafford-based photographer Adrian Clarke, who is building up an impressive portfolio of bird photography. Many of his images are notable for their low-key and minimalist style – a method that introduces a unique level of character and atmosphere into his subjects. Adrian is also a father of three children, including twins who have cerebral palsy, epilepsy and special educational needs. In this way, photography offers a respite from the stresses of family life and a therapeutic outlet for his creative talents.



➤ 'I started photography when I was a kid, but for one reason or another took a lengthy break,' says Adrian. 'When I returned I was fairly aimless with what I was shooting. I just wanted to get back into the practice and experiment with a variety of styles and techniques. I've always been drawn to nature, so a lot of this took place within the landscape and marshes around my home. Between shots I began to notice the wildlife, particularly the birds, and started making a note of their patterns of behaviour. It was a very calming thing to observe.'

'Each species has its own traits and personality. It's a real challenge to represent their individuality in ways that I find interesting and different. Eventually, I found I was shooting more birds than landscapes. I then began changing my skills and equipment to reflect that. It also doesn't hurt that I'm lucky enough to have a wetlands nature reserve five minutes from my door, so even if I have limited time accessibility is pretty easy.'

### Visual appeal

Of all the birds Adrian encounters on his days out shooting, he has a particular affinity for herons. The first time he saw one, he was impressed by its size and grace. When he finally got close enough to watch one fish, he was struck by the speed and ferocity of its catch contrasted against the calm and dignified hunt that preceded it.



**Above: One of the pitfalls of photographing any bird is that they're faster than you will ever be...**

'I find herons visually interesting because of their markings and the way the same bird can look completely different depending on how it holds its neck,' says Adrian. 'I usually try to avoid taking lots of photos of the same bird, whether it's one popping his head out of the grass or sitting peacefully by the riverside.'

As anyone who has tried their hand at bird photography will tell you, there are many pitfalls. It really isn't the easiest task and can only come from a dedication to the craft.

'The pitfalls are that herons – in fact, any bird species – are faster than you will ever be,' adds Adrian. 'They're certainly better at hiding than you and can usually see you a long time before you see them. It should go without saying that good

camouflage and some field skills help, but unless you're in a hide you're kidding yourself if you think they can't see you.'

Adrian says it's also difficult getting yourself into a position where you can compose the image to achieve what you want from it. This is where patience and observation come into play.

'I have to be honest, those qualities are my weaknesses,' Adrian admits. 'While I respect photographers who can camp in a hide all day for a shoot, I find it hard. I do intend to give it another try this year, as I always find myself thinking I'm missing something. This working method has served me well so far. Most of my best shots have been hit and run.'

**Left: ... and their speed makes it very difficult to get into position and compose an image**



Adrian identifies an unusual influence in his work – that of Armenian-Canadian portrait photographer Yousuf Karsh, whose uniquely lit black & white portraits truly bring out the character of the sitter. 'Karsh inspired me to use a similar approach to wildlife,' says Adrian. 'I like working in this way because it isolates the subject and creates a more intimate feel. A lot of wildlife shots have a straight-out-of-camera look. There's nothing wrong with that, it's just that when I edit I'm trying to make an artistic representation of how I was feeling, or perceived the moment to be, when I pressed the shutter.'

### Getting the look

Adrian says that shooting in a low-key style demands that he must see the scene as such. You must look for contrasts between the subject and background that can be exploited in processing, although there are likely to be varying degrees of success. Using exposure compensation means you can go up and down over the course of a few shots and select the best.

'My workflow is a little convoluted, but it works for me,' says Adrian. 'It could be that others have a much simpler approach. I import the images to Lightroom and cull them down to the ones that stand out to me. I then open them in Photoshop and apply a clean-up action. Once this is done, I'll use a selective blur on the areas I want to de-emphasise before taking it back to Lightroom, which I find easier for the next step. I've saved a few presets of the looks I use most, which I'll preview before deciding on the final effect. After that, it's a case of



### Keeping it simple

Noted for his low-key approach, Adrian says that it's a good technique as it cuts out any unnecessary distractions and allows the viewer to concentrate on the composition and story of an image. 'A lot of my work is fairly dark in feel, and I'm especially fond of black & white,' he says. 'I put this down to the fact that I started shooting images back at school on a Praktika MTL5 loaded with black & white film. I remember once posting a black & white image of a heron on a photography forum, which seemed to really offend the "wildlife crew" for what seemed to be no other reason than it being black & white. It actually spurred me on to develop the style further.'

**Above:** By not causing the robin any distress, it was easy to gain its trust, especially as these birds are very inquisitive

**Right:** Look for contrasts between the subject and the background that you can exploit in processing







'You can find something interesting and unique whatever nature throws at you,' says Adrian

▶ playing with the sliders until I get the image I want.'

Adrian uses mainly the blacks, shadows, contrast and highlights to darken the image or background, and then the adjustment brush to highlight or tone down areas until he achieves the look he wants. He says it's also worth knowing that the colour saturation sliders can be useful in some situations on a black & white conversion, particularly the greens and yellows. Sometimes it's as simple as applying a gradient or radial filter. He says the new dehaze feature is great for adding a foggy/matt look.

It may feel as though Adrian is neglecting a couple of vital features, things that some photographers spend weeks pursuing: light and weather. 'While it's nice to have good light and weather, you can find something interesting and unique whatever nature throws at you,' he says. 'I hear too many people complaining about how the light is "no good". Some of my favourite shots have been on dismal days – sometimes you just have to look at things differently. That said, the weather does have an effect on how I edit the images, and I try to convey that through the feel of a shot.'

### Bird behaviour

Many photographers will tell you how important it is to understand the behaviour pattern of your subject, to work out their routine. As Adrian says, it's important to know how far you can push it when

approaching a subject so as not to cause distress. This will allow the photographer to find out a little more about the birds' behaviour. It also helps judge what kind of shot you can expect, especially if you know their feeding habits.

'For example,' Adrian says, 'when I caught a shot of a robin perched on my camera [see page 31], I had a pretty good idea I would be able to achieve it without distressing the bird because I knew robins are inquisitive animals. They can be seen in gardens and allotments, following gardeners around for worms as they dig. The robin spent quite a bit of time in and out of my camera bag and on my knee, so it only needed a little encouragement to model for me. It was one of those experiences that keeps me going; a moment of trust from the bird gave me a great feeling and a good shot as the result. A great book to read is *Wildlife Photography Field Skills and Techniques* by Paul Hobson. That book taught me a lot.'

### Local life

When asked about his local area, Adrian says: 'Stafford has so much to offer and I've barely scratched the surface. There are so many little villages with interesting lanes and churches, and there are great landscape opportunities and the wildlife is varied. As for my usual haunts, Dooxey Marshes has so much wildlife you could spend an entire day there. The area has two purpose-built hides and a good



Adrian Clarke, 42, is based in Staffordshire. He has been shooting since picking up a Praktica MTL5 at school and enjoys experimenting with new techniques, especially in relation to wildlife photography. You can see more of his work at [www.ajc1173.wix.com/clarkepictures](http://www.ajc1173.wix.com/clarkepictures) or on Flickr at [www.flickr.com/photos/92460969@N05](http://www.flickr.com/photos/92460969@N05)

## 'A moment of trust from the bird gave me a great feeling and a good shot as the result'

path. Once there, you'll see buzzards, kingfishers, finches, geese, egrets, cormorants, ducks, buntings and, of course, herons. They're visible all year round. As for migrants, there are lapwings, snipe, redwings and stonechats, to name a few. There are also otters, foxes, rabbits and water voles, but they are very wary. The one thing I'd say is remember to take wellington boots as it's prone to flooding.

'I'd also have to recommend a visit to Staffordshire Wildlife Trust's headquarters at Wolsley Bridge near Rugeley. It has a 26-acre site with walks, a sensory garden, a wildlife garden and a purpose-built boardwalk around pools and the River Trent. It's also got great wheelchair access to a good portion of the grounds, so we enjoy taking the kids there to experience nature. This is a good local spot for kingfishers and there's always something to see all year round. It's best to arrive early, but most of the wildlife is used to people.'

Like any intrepid photographer, Adrian makes his way around Stafford armed to the teeth. He mainly uses a Canon EOS 7D Mark II, mostly because it is weather-sealed, has great autofocus and can shoot 10fps. 'I'll use an EOS 5D Mark III if I think I need a better ISO performance, though,' says Adrian. 'As good as it is, the 7D Mark II isn't great at higher ISOs, but it more than makes up for it with the autofocus, frames per second and how easy it is to use the exposure compensation.'

'My main workhorse lens is the Sigma 150-600mm. This is truly a great lens. It's built like a tank, has fast autofocus with the 7D Mark II, and with the image stabilisation I've had decent results handheld down to 1/100sec. Wide open, it does a good job of isolating the subject and is still sharp. I'd been considering the Canon 400mm f/5.6, but so far can't justify it with the results I'm getting from the Sigma. I'll use the Canon 70-200mm f/2.8 on the 5D Mark III if I need a wider focal length or aperture, or if I'm carrying both bodies I can swap the lenses and cover most situations. I sometimes take my Canon 16-35mm if I think I might get a nice landscape shot.'



'I find herons visually interesting,' says Adrian, 'because of their markings and the way the same bird can look completely different depending on how it holds its neck'

## A typical day

'I take two approaches: my "work" routine and my "play" routine,' says Adrian. 'My work routine is the hour or half hour I have on my way to work, or on my lunch break (this will change soon, as I'm being made redundant). On those days I will cycle through the marshes, stopping to check some of the usual spots to see what's about. I'll have a quick scout around with the binoculars to decide if there's anything worth giving some time to. If not, I'll move on.'

'I've got a pretty good feel now for the areas and routines, and what to expect, but it can be a little frustrating when you spot something just as you have to leave. This is good for a challenge as it's the same places and animals, so I look for ways to make it a bit different. It's very rare I plan shots, but I always keep my eyes open for points of interest that could give opportunities in different weather or lighting conditions.'

'My play routine is when I get a day to myself and I'll tend to go a little further afield. I'll check the bird news tweets to see if there's anything of interest nearby, but a lot of the time I'll have a look on Google Maps, pick a spot and explore a new area, just wander round and see what the day brings. Sometimes it's good, sometimes bad, but it fulfils my urge to get outdoors and check for points of interest that might be worth a return visit.'



# LOCATION GUIDE

# Holkham Bay

Set on the north Norfolk coast, this bay offers a varied landscape, as **Jon Gibbs** explains



## KIT LIST

### ▼ Wellies

The bay can get very muddy, especially at Holkham Gap, and there are sometimes small channels to cross, depending on the amount of water left after the tide recedes.

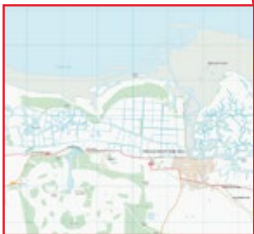


### ▼ Tide tables

Be aware of the tide times. In some parts of the bay it can be very easy to be cut off by the tide. It is safe because you can wait it out on top of the dunes, but walking back through the rising water is dangerous due to the undulating nature of the marshes and channels.

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Low Water		High Water	
Time	Height	Time	Height
06:00	0.2	18:00	1.2
06:30	0.1	18:30	1.1
07:00	0.0	19:00	1.0
07:30	-0.1	19:30	0.9
08:00	-0.2	20:00	0.8
08:30	-0.3	20:30	0.7
09:00	-0.4	21:00	0.6
09:30	-0.5	21:30	0.5
10:00	-0.6	22:00	0.4
10:30	-0.7	22:30	0.3
11:00	-0.8	23:00	0.2
11:30	-0.9	23:30	0.1
12:00	-1.0	00:00	0.0
12:30	-1.1	00:30	-0.1
13:00	-1.2	01:00	-0.2
13:30	-1.3	01:30	-0.3
14:00	-1.4	02:00	-0.4
14:30	-1.5	02:30	-0.5
15:00	-1.6	03:00	-0.6
15:30	-1.7	03:30	-0.7
16:00	-1.8	04:00	-0.8
16:30	-1.9	04:30	-0.9
17:00	-2.0	05:00	-1.0



HOLKHAM Bay is a stunning area of the north Norfolk coast and is part of the Holkham National Nature Reserve. Its incredibly varied landscape includes huge expanses of sand, beautiful dune systems, marshland, saltmarshes and woodland. Aside from opportunities for landscape photography, the whole area is a haven for wildlife. Summer brings colonies of terns and winter sees pink-footed geese flying over the bay at the end of the day. It is also common to see barn owls and even marsh harriers at the nearby marshes.

There are three possible parking places for access to Holkham Bay. The easiest is in the village of Holkham at the Lady Anne's Drive car park, which is a lovely tree-lined avenue. The entrance to the car park is on the coastal A149 just a short drive west from Wells-next-the-Sea. The bay is also accessible from the beach car park in Wells-next-the-Sea and from the village of Burnham Overy Staithe, but this involves a fairly long walk.

Parking at Lady Anne's Drive gives you access to the wide view of Holkham Gap, a stunning semi-circular bay. If you use the car park at Wells-next-the-Sea you can visit the famous colourful beach huts before heading towards the bay. Parking at Burnham Overy Staithe involves a walk beside Burnham Harbour before you reach the nature reserve's highest dunes that have marvellous views in all directions. It is well worth trying all these alternatives for their different aspects.



Left: The subtle colours of the Holkham National Nature Reserve in Norfolk



Below: It is not unusual to find the beach empty at the beginning or end of the day



## Jon Gibbs



Jon is an award-winning landscape photographer and gallery

owner based in Norfolk.  
[www.jon-gibbs.co.uk](http://www.jon-gibbs.co.uk)

## Shooting advice

### Time to visit

Holkham Bay is an all-year-round location, but for me it is at its most beautiful in autumn and winter when it has a real sense of wildness.

In summer a wonderful carpet of sea lavender appears on the saltmarshes, but at that time of year the bay can be very busy with visitors.

First or last light is the best time of day to shoot, and on a stormy winter day look for opportunities in the woodland, such as the incredible twisted shapes of some of the pine trees.

If you can plan a visit with a high tide you may see Holkham Gap fill with tidal waters, which is an incredible sight, but do respect the tide – it is easy to position yourself on top of the dunes to watch and then find yourself cut off.

Such an expansive area can be a challenge to photograph successfully; you can be so easily bewildered by the possibilities and sense of space. I have found that positioning myself on the dunes gives me much-needed height that delivers fabulous wide vista compositions.

### Food and lodging

Wells-next-the-Sea has a large selection of accommodation, including guesthouses, B&Bs, campsites and caravan parks. It also has a wonderful selection of pubs, cafés and restaurants, and is an ideal base for visiting the bay and the whole stretch of the north Norfolk coast.

The Victoria Inn in Holkham is situated just opposite the entrance to the Lady Anne's Drive car park and offers accommodation and meals. Visit [www.holkham.co.uk](http://www.holkham.co.uk) for more information about the area.



First or last light is the best time of day to shoot such expansive vistas



The pine woodland was planted to stabilise the dunes and it offers superb photographic opportunities

# Women of war

## Nick Danziger

Photojournalist **Nick Danziger** talks to **Steve Fairclough** about his project, *Eleven Women Facing War*, on show at the Imperial War Museum, London

**T**he International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) commissioned a study on the effects of war on women: what was happening to women and what needed to be addressed, supported or changed. It wanted to illustrate some of its work across the world and asked me to produce a series of photographs and short documentary films to do that. I knew about the ICRC as a result of my trips to Afghanistan in 1984, when the Soviet Union was there. It [ICRC] has been very helpful to me since about 1989, so it's been a long-term relationship.

I found these women by a variety of means. For example, one of the women was in a female theatre group and we met a whole group of them. In another case (see main picture) – in Afghanistan – a young girl simply pushed her way through a massive crowd of men and started telling me her story; it seemed incredible. She grabbed my hand, pushed her way back through the crowd and marched me past all the men to where she was living – a

kind of tent cobbled together with disused rags. She was [ten-year-old] Mah Bibi, whose parents had died.

She's the only one I haven't been able to find again. She had pushed her way through the crowd as there was going to be a food distribution, but she wasn't allowed to sign up as head of the family because she was a minor. She was outraged by the injustice of it all, and when I arrived in a vehicle she came forward and started telling me her story. The younger of the two brothers is in the background [of the picture]. The condition of the tent was literally rope and string used as stitching between a kind of handkerchief of rags. I was doing stills and a colleague, Laura Ashton, was shooting the video – there were just two of us in Afghanistan.

Initially, [the project] was manic because we went to Israel, Gaza, the West Bank, Sierra Leone, Colombia, Afghanistan, Serbia, Kosovo and Bosnia. It was pretty much non-stop for about three or four months. But that was the easy part, as it took years



ALPHTRESO/NOZ DANZIGER

to find everyone again.

I was shooting in black & white, usually on Kodak Tri-X [film]. I was using Tri-X 400 black & white and Olympus OM-4Ti and 3Ti cameras, which I continue to use today with the same lenses, 30 years after I first got them!

I met some remarkable women and it was always on my mind [to return], so when I went back to those locations I wanted to meet up with them again. I kept thinking about these women and what had become of them. I tracked down ten; it's remarkable [to know] that ten of them are definitely alive. I'm still determined to find out exactly what happened to Mah Bibi.

I've been to that area [of Afghanistan] three times since 2001, and each time I've looked for her, but it's a remote area.

The lady in the Gaza Strip is Zakiya (see below right). Her husband was arrested and given several life sentences. There was a group of spouses of men in detention who used to visit their husbands in prison for a monthly visit. So we met them in the front courtyard of the ICRC as they were signing up to go on this trip. We met Zakiya and she told us her story – she was bringing up five children on her own. In most cases, the children have to go to the husband's family to be looked after, but she was determined to bring up her



### Nick Danziger

Nick's most recent books include *Mana: Inside the All Blacks*, a behind-the-scenes look at New Zealand's All Blacks rugby team, and *Onze femmes*, which traces the lives of 11 women from countries in conflict over the past decade. His 'mirror' image of Tony Blair and George W Bush, shot during a 30-day study of a Prime Minister at war, won a World Press Photo award in 2004. [www.nickdanziger.com](http://www.nickdanziger.com)





own kids. What's remarkable is that the daughters have all been more successful – they're all university educated, teachers, and so on. The sad thing is, not specific to her but for other women, the men often face long prison sentences and when they're released they

decide to take another wife – usually much younger.

It's important to realise that women shouldn't be more vulnerable in war. There are laws that protect not just women but civilians. Culturally, I think that unfortunately women have

often been targeted for particular aspects that take place in war. It might even be in terms of legal redress – for example, a woman whose husband goes missing often can't inherit the land.

A strong part of the project was not just to give women a

voice but for change to take place culturally, and legally in terms of protection afforded to women – that changes should be implemented. And that's what this project was about: advocating change and seeking further protection for women.

AP



## ELEVEN WOMEN FACING WAR

THIS is the first time this touring exhibition has been shown in the UK. The prints are not particularly large – most are 50x77cm. I want a sort of intimacy; I want you to 'get into' the picture rather than stand back and look at it. I want the viewer to be up there, in front of the images. None of the photographs are cropped – that's how I shot them, which is really important to me. They're all shot on wideangle lenses, so I'm very close to the people. In a sense, I want people to be at the same distance they were shot at – the distance they'll stand when looking at them. In the captions there's a little bit of their story – a way of drawing you into each individual's story.

Eleven Women Facing War is on show at the Imperial War Museum in London until 24 April. Admission is free. Visit [www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk).



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# Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them



2

## Mega Dog Session No 2

This dog, with its full eyes and tilted head, is a lovely portrait. Sadly, the dog died some weeks later but the owner was left with a beautiful reminder  
**Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 1/160sec at f/10, ISO 100**

## Paul Clifton, Surrey



While he works in a variety of genres, Paul identifies portraiture as his first love, whether it be adults, children or, as we see here, animals. These images are the result of Paul's 'mega dog session', where he shot more than 20 dogs in eight hours. 'I met some lovely people and stunning dogs,' says Paul. See more at [www.paulcliftonphotography.com](http://www.paulcliftonphotography.com).



## Mega Dog Session No 7

Again we find a playful take on portraiture. It's the labrador's tongue that really makes this shot a winner  
**Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 1/160sec at f/10, ISO 100**

5



## Mega Dog Session No 5

Getting the right angle here was a challenge. However, the introduction of a treat resulted in a nice side shot  
**Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 1/160sec at f/10, ISO 100**

## Mega Dog Session No 1

By producing a head-on portrait, we can revel in the beautiful mismatched colours of the eyes  
**Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 1/160sec at f/10, ISO 100**

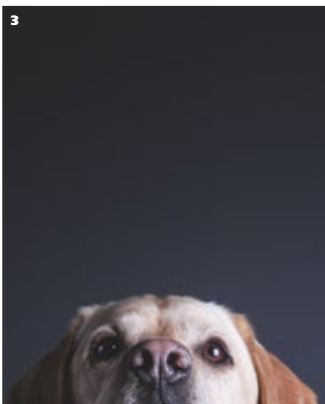


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### Mega Dog Session No 4

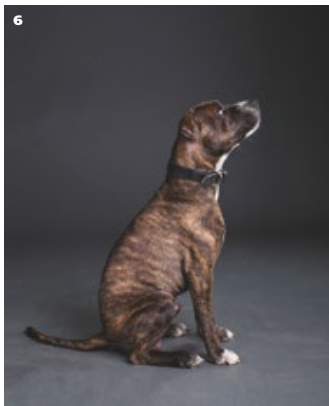
**3** Nick cropped in tight to reveal the dog's personality  
Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 1/160sec at f/10, ISO 100

### Mega Dog Session No 6

**6** A simple portrait taken side-on to reveal the fur tones  
Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 1/160sec at f/10, ISO 100

### Mega Dog Session No 3

**7** Placing the subject off-centre adds a nice edge to this shot  
Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 1/160sec at f/10, ISO 100





1

## Nick Haigh, Lincoln



When asked what he loves about photography, Nick says: 'I love the fact you're creating an image that nobody else will. Someone

may produce an image that has the same subject or is compositionally similar, but the lighting, mood and so on will never be the same as another image that has been taken of that subject.' Nick intends to keep capturing places that he has never been to before, especially cities with fabulous architecture – such as these images of London. Visit [www.nickhaighphotography.com](http://www.nickhaighphotography.com).

### Tower Bridge

1 By including these streaks of light, Nick has created a hallucinatory street view of London's famous Tower Bridge  
Fujifilm X-E2, 18-55mm, 26secs at f/22, ISO 200, tripod, remote release, polariser



2

## Westminster

Nick has used the bands of light to draw our eye into the yellow-saturated architecture  
Fujifilm X-E2, 18-55mm, 20secs at f/11, ISO 200, tripod



# Reader Portfolio



4



5



## The Mall

4 This shot is built around the use of converging lines, bringing our attention to the centre of the frame. The flags are an excellent way to help guide our gaze  
Nikon D7000, 70-200mm, 15secs at f/9, ISO 100, tripod, remote release

## Tower Bridge 2

5 Using the slow shutter has smoothed out the water, resulting in a beautiful palette of reflected colours to complement the strong tones of the surface scene  
Nikon D7000, 17-50mm, 5secs at f/16, ISO 100, tripod

3



## London Eye

This image is awash with colour, but the real virtue lies in its simplicity of composition and graphic nature  
Fujifilm X-E2, 18-55mm, 30secs at f/9, ISO 200, tripod, polariser

ROUND THREE  
NOW OPEN!



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## Amateur Filmmaker of the Year competition

Your chance to enter the UK's newest competition for budding amateur filmmakers

TO COINCIDE with the launch of The Video Mode website, we're pleased to announce our new Amateur Filmmaker of the Year (AFOY) competition. AFOY challenges you to get creative with your filmmaking, and gives you the opportunity to win some fantastic prizes worth £10,000 in total.

The competition is split into three rounds, each with its unique theme: Nature, Time and Love. To enter, submit a video no more than five minutes in length, of HD quality. You can shoot on any camera you'd like, and the content and editing are up to your imagination – so long as it fits

the round's particular theme.

Visit [www.thevideomode.com](http://www.thevideomode.com) to view the top videos, as well as the scores and a leaderboard for the overall competition. The winner will be the person with the most points after three rounds, who will win the overall prize as well as title of Amateur Filmmaker of the Year.

### Round Three: Love

We want to see how you convey your love for someone or something through film in a creative way for this round. Try using techniques such as 'lens whacking' or 'light leaks' to add that soft feel to your footage. For examples, go to [www.thevideomode.com/examples](http://www.thevideomode.com/examples).

### Rounds and dates

Below is a list of the competition rounds, their themes and the dates you need to know. To view the results, visit [www.thevideomode.com](http://www.thevideomode.com). When planning your entry, take into consideration the criteria of fulfilling the brief, creativity and technical excellence on which you'll be judged.

Theme	Opens	Closes
Round One: Nature	1 Aug	30 Sep
Round Two: Time	1 Oct	31 Dec
Round Three: Love	1 Jan	28 Feb

The overall winner will be announced in April 2016

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#### Round Two

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# Appraisal

Expert advice and tips on improving your photography from **Damien Demolder**

**BEFORE**



The contrast was increased and exposure darkened in the original image

## Jama Masjid Mosque Tony Beane

Canon EOS 5D, 28-135mm, 1/200sec at f/7.1, ISO 320

TONY saw Abhilash Surendran's picture of the Jama Masjid Mosque in our 9 January issue and sent in some images of his own from a visit he made to this magnificent building in Delhi, India. Abhilash photographed the whole façade of the building, with pigeons taking flight in the foreground, but Tony has moved in closer to find something of the life that goes on in the nooks and

crannies of the building.

I really like this shot of two gentlemen having a chat, with the wonderful stonework and archway framing them so well. The colour of the stone is fantastic, and the soft light picks the action out well, showing the depth of the scene without plunging anything into deep shadow – well, except the face of the man on the steps.

Exposing this scene would have

**AFTER**



Picture of the week

The addition of more of the building on the right of the image has restored the visual symmetry

been quite tricky, as we want to maintain detail both in the faces as well as in the white robes of the reclining man. This is where raw files come into their own.

Tony tells me he increased the contrast of his original and darkened the exposure. I think he needed to reduce the contrast and increase the exposure very slightly. Reducing contrast lifts shadows and reduces highlights, while a little midtone curve can give us the separation we need to make things stand out.

It's a shame that in a shot that demands symmetry there is more mosque on the left of the men than on the right. That imbalance distracts me and takes my concentration away from what I should be looking at. I've added a bit more to the right to show what the picture may have looked like had Tony squared it up at the time.

It is a lovely shot either way, and very well seen, so Tony wins my picture of the week award. Well done – now I want to go there too!



**Win!** Send up to six prints, slides or images on CD (include the original files from the camera along with your versions on the CD). Tell us about the pictures and include details of equipment used and exposure settings. Send your images to *Appraisal* at the address on page 18. Enclose an SAE if you want them returned. The picture of the week will receive a year's digital subscription to AP worth £79.99

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## BEFORE



An extremely adept photograph of an impressive location

## Landscape Adrian Olsen

Fujifilm X-T1, 10-24mm, 1/220sec at f/13, ISO 200

I THINK it's very hard to make a good landscape. It's much more difficult than most people think, and a constant source of frustration for the self-assessing photographer. I find the most frustrating aspect of shooting landscapes is the difference between the drama, beauty and splendour of nature's hand and the poor imitation on the rear screen of my camera. In so many other areas of photography we try

to make what is in front of us look better, but often in landscape photography we are trying to keep up with the subject.

Adrian has certainly found a good location to shoot, and he must have been a good boy in the weeks leading up to his expedition because his gods have given him the perfect day. It is a lovely scene and has been accurately photographed. The picture lacks something, though.

## AFTER



This edited version brings out the dramatic characteristics of the rugged landscape

Adrian is effectively saying, 'Oh, look – that's nice,' but not really saying what it is that caught his attention or should catch ours.

A closer look reveals some remarkable features that he could have made more of an effort to point out – the dramatic cliffs, the delightful reflections on the water, the clouds, the contours and ruggedness of the landscape, and that dart of snow that busts into the left of the frame. The camera needs our help to emphasise the exciting parts, so the viewer can be enthused. You can read lines

from Shakespeare in a monotone or with feeling and gusto. They will be the same lines, but they'll sound very different.

I've made a slightly different version of Adrian's image that emphasises the characteristics I mentioned earlier. I had to do it using software, but Adrian could have done a lot of it with exposure, viewpoint as well as in-camera colour and contrast controls. My version may be a step too far for some people, but I wanted to show how differently the same scene could be presented.

Midtone contrast has made the dancer stand out



## AFTER

## Dancer Sophia Apostolidou

Nikon D3200, 18-55mm, 1/125sec at f/5.6, ISO 100

I LIKE this idea very much. Sophia has made a great distinction between the curved elegance of the dancer and the harsh, crumbling, hard-edged surroundings, and I love the idea that we can look out of the window at the view. This adds great depth to the frame and gives us an idea of where she is.

The problem, though, is that while there seems to be plenty of light streaming in through those windows, the dancer isn't benefiting from any of it – she rather blends into the background, instead of standing out so we can see her. There is a lovely bit of light on the side of her face that's facing away from the camera, but not nearly enough on this side of her to lift her away from the wall.

Ultimately, Sophia needed to move the girl into the light, but she also needed a reflector to throw some of the illumination back onto the dancer's rear and shoulders. Less exposure would have made the background darker, giving a better chance of making the girl stand out.

I can't move the girl into the light, but I've added some midtone contrast to create a greater difference between her and the

## BEFORE



While this image has plenty of light, the girl is rather indistinct in the frame

background, and darkened the 'exposure' so that the highlights of the distant town and those on the pillars of the windows become much less distracting.

It is a very nice idea, Sophia, but giving as much attention to the light as you did to the girl and the background would have made this an excellent image.

**Damien Demolder** is a photographer, journalist and photographic equipment expert, speaker, judge and educator. He has worked in the photographic publishing industry for 17 years, including 15 years at *Amateur Photographer*. He uses a wide range of equipment, from wooden plate cameras to the latest DSLRs, and is a great fan of all products that make good photography more accessible to more people

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# Accessories

Useful gadgets to enhance your photography, from phones to filters...

## Jack Wolfskin Zenon Basic Snap-In down jacket

● [www.jack-wolfskin.co.uk](http://www.jack-wolfskin.co.uk) ● £130

**Phil Hall** reviews a key piece of clothing for outdoor photographers

A DECENT technical jacket can make all the difference out in the field, keeping you warm while getting those vital shots or when trudging back to the car or a café.

German outdoor-clothing company Jack Wolfskin has a heritage dating back 35 years and offers a broad range of apparel for those who love to be outside whatever the conditions. The Zenon Basic Snap-In down jacket sits towards the lower end of the firm's down-jacket range, but don't discount it because of that. Available in a choice of three colours and in both men's and ladies' fits (although colour choice is reduced to two), styling is understated and uncluttered, while it sports a shorter length than some.

Although lightweight at only 400g, the number of pockets is limited to three. Both the shell and lining are 100% polyamide that is both water-repellent and windproof. If you need something a little more resilient to the elements, the presence of snap fasteners means it can be integrated into a matching weatherproof jacket. The arms and shoulders are lined with 100% polyester (called Fibercloud), but the core is insulated with a mixture of 90% white duck down and 10% feather.

### Verdict

There are no doubt warmer and more technical jackets on the market for when conditions get really bad, but having worn this jacket over the winter months there's very little, if anything, to complain about. Worn as part of a layer system for extra warmth, I never had an issue with getting cold, especially when paired with a decent hat and pair of gloves, and never felt restricted wearing it. The icing on the cake is the weight – it's rather like wearing a warm cloud.

### At a glance

- Windproof
- Breathable
- Warm down/synthetic loose fibrefill insulation
- Lightweight
- Easily packed away

### Weight

Tipping the scales at a lightweight 400g, you hardly know you're wearing it.

### Insulation

Filled with 90% duck down and 10% feather, the Zenon has a 700-cubic-inch down fill power, while the shoulders and sleeves have Fibercloud insulation.

### Two side pockets

With two side pockets, the jacket can be rolled up easily and packed away in the left-hand pocket should conditions warm up.

**Amateur Photographer**  
**Testbench**  
**GOLD**  
★★★★★

### IN THE RANGE

#### Jack Wolfskin Texapore downshell jacket £550

Filled with goose down for excellent heat retention, this jacket is waterproof and windproof. Breathable material promotes air circulation while still keeping you very warm.



#### Jack Wolfskin Terrenceville down jacket £190

Complete with a hood and fleece cuffs, this jacket is both warm and windproof. It features two side pockets for you to keep pieces of kit in, as well as an internal pocket for other bits.



#### Jack Wolfskin Lhotse vest £95

Ideal for when you just need to keep your core warm, this gilet provides a warm down filling, while being lightweight enough to pack down easily into your rucksack or camera bag.





# Fotomate macro sliders

£15-£20



Good-value macro sliders are available from Amazon or eBay

I REMEMBER when I first started getting interested in macro photography, and found that focusing on extreme close-ups was far from straightforward. Articles on the subject often suggested putting the camera on a tripod and using a macro slider (also known as a focusing rail) to move it back and forth to fine-tune focus, but there was no way I could justify spending the £100 or more they cost at the time.

Now, of course, we live in a globalised economy and it's possible to get much cheaper kit online from Amazon or eBay. Among the many photographic products leaving Chinese factories are inexpensive macro sliders that are sold under various guises. The ones we're looking at here are branded Fotomate, but identical-looking products can be had either unbranded or under other names.

The basic design is simple: the metal base screws onto your tripod head, and has a sliding metal plate on top. This has a large rubberised platform to hold the camera securely, with sliding  $\frac{1}{4}$ in screws allowing it to be positioned however you need. Rotating a large knob on the base moves the plate back and forwards using a rack-and-pinion system; a smaller one alongside it locks the camera in the desired position. Scales along the edge marked in centimetres aid in repositioning. Three versions are available in 16cm, 26cm and 31cm lengths.

Given their low price, these sliders really aren't too bad. They can't be adjusted as finely as the similar-looking, but much more expensive, Manfrotto 454 Micro Positioning Plate, and they can struggle when set at an angle rather than flat, particularly with heavy cameras such as full-frame DSLRs. But they're a great entry point for experimenting with macro shooting, especially with lightweight CSCs or entry-level DSLRs.

Andy Westlake



Using two sliders crossed at 90° allows fine adjustment of focus and composition

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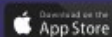


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# Master at night

**Michael Topham** gets his chance to find out how **Sony's Alpha 7R II** performs at night on a nostalgic photo shoot in deepest, darkest Worcestershire



## At a glance

- 42.4MP, full-frame, Exmor R CMOS sensor
- 0.5in, 2.4-million-dot OLED EVF
- ISO 100-25,600 (50-102,400 expanded)
- 399 phase-detection AF points
- 5fps continuous shooting
- 4K video (100Mbps)
- £2,599 body only

It's 6pm on a Friday, and it's usually around this time that I finish up at the office and take a ten-minute stroll to the station to catch a train home. Tonight isn't any ordinary Friday in London, though, and instead of walking through Waterloo Station's congested concourse I find myself wandering onto a deserted platform in Bewdley, a small Georgian town in Worcestershire,

where smoke gently rises from the chimney of the booking office, and lights illuminate the elegant canopies and station footbridge.

The reason for being so far from home is to visit the Severn Valley Railway, where tonight I'm attending a photo charter that aims to recreate scenes of a bygone age for those who'd like to challenge their photographic ability and capture a series of timeless shots

that only a minority of photographers have the opportunity to take. Twilight is rapidly fading, it's bitterly cold, and if I weren't already going to be challenged enough by tonight's conditions I'm going to be using a camera I'm not entirely familiar with when it comes to shooting in low light. My camera of choice is the Sony Alpha 7R II, which I've been longing to get my hands on again



This shot was captured with a sensitivity of ISO 800. It's one of a few shots taken when the Sony Alpha 7R II was supported on a tripod



Increasing the sensitivity to ISO 12,800 enabled me to shoot handheld at 1/125sec to get this challenging shot

customisation on offer, and it doesn't take long before I find myself entering the custom key settings menu to check that the down button is set to focus area and the centre button is set to standard, which will allow me to instantly reposition the focus point around the frame.

I'll be relying on the camera's 1,200-zone evaluative metering system set to multi-segment mode, but at this point I'm kicking myself for not packing a cable release, leaving me with little choice but to set up the 2sec self-timer to prevent nudging the camera inadvertently when firing the shutter.

Setting the Alpha 7R II to shutter priority and dialling in a shutter speed of 10 seconds at ISO 800 gives me an aperture of f/8. A couple of shots later and I realise this lengthy exposure isn't working well with the billowing steam that's shrouding the locomotives. I'm forced to raise the sensitivity to ISO 3,200, which I can recall from my review of the camera is well within the sensor's capabilities. I'm now shooting with a 4sec shutter speed, and this faster exposure is allowing me to shoot more shots in a shorter timeframe, not to mention speeding up processing and write times. From my first set of shots it seems the camera's sensitivity is going to be frequently used throughout the evening, so to make life easier I find myself assigning ISO to custom button 1 on the top-plate. It's now 6.30pm

and I wander to the station café to register and receive a quick safety briefing with the others attending tonight before getting started.

As I make my way to the first scene of the evening, I don my high-visibility jacket, and with the permission of the event's co-ordinator I clamber down beside the platform and nestle between two other photographers. The organiser of tonight's photo shoot has kindly laid on some temporary additional lighting to help illuminate the scene, but with limited time to get the shot, I have to work quickly. The added light in this scene allows me to drop the sensitivity to ISO 1,600 and stop the lens down to f/11.

Those either side of me are quick to notice that I'm shooting from low level and lower their tripods in an attempt to replicate the same type of shot. The photographer to my left is arrogant about the fact he's using

a Nikon D4, but he quickly pipes down when he admits defeat and comments that you really need a pull-out screen and electronic level function like the Alpha 7R II has to get the shot.

Smug that I have captured the shot others with fixed screens are struggling to take, I move on to the next scene, pausing briefly at the footbridge, where I have a chance to capture a locomotive that's beautifully lit from the side. Knowing that I'm in the way of others, and with no time to set up my tripod, it's either a handheld shot or a missed opportunity.

Not one for missing a shot, I hit the custom button 4 to turn the Alpha 7R II's SteadyShot function on and crank up the sensitivity to ISO 25,600. This gives me a shutter speed of 1/40sec shooting at the maximum aperture on my Sony FE 24-70mm f/4 ZA OSS Carl Zeiss Vario-Tessar T\* lens. I'm conscious this



## Preparation

With half an hour before the event starts, I mount the Alpha 7R II to my tripod and fire off a few frames before twilight disappears. The mixture of daylight-balanced and fluorescent bulbs in some of the lamps are playing havoc with the white balance, but I don't allow this to put me off and continue to get accustomed with the low-light conditions and the Alpha 7R II's exposure and focus settings. Keeping things simple, I set the focus mode to single AF and the focus area to Flexible Spot: M.

One of the things I've come to appreciate about Sony's Alpha 7-series cameras is the level of

All wrapped up and ready to shoot. AP's Michael Topham gets familiar with the Alpha 7R II before the event



The mixture of daylight-balanced and fluorescent bulbs required careful adjustment of the white balance later in Lightroom



This image was taken using the Sony FE 24-70mm f/4 ZA OSS lens set to an aperture of f/4 at ISO 1,600

shutter speed is well below double my focal length, so I'm relying on the 5-axis image stabilisation to compensate for my jittery hands. As an extra precaution, I brace the viewfinder tightly against my eye before squeezing the shutter button gently. I receive a few odd looks from those passing by with DSLRs and tripods slung over their shoulders. They're clearly not used

to seeing someone attempt a handheld shot in such challenging conditions. A quick inspection on the screen reveals what seems like an acceptable image. As for the amount of work it'll take to offset the affect of noise at such a high sensitivity in the raw file, well, that's a job for later in Lightroom.

As I walk to the third scene I lower the sensitivity to ISO 6,400 and stop the aperture down to f/8

to ensure my depth of field isn't too shallow. It's hard to resist shooting the old station signs on my way past and with one leg of my tripod fully extended to create a makeshift monopod and SteadyShot still turned on, I take a few shots with a shutter speed of 1/8sec. Usually, I wouldn't risk shooting at such slow speeds for fear of handshake creeping into my shots, but the magnified view

on screen reveals that my shots are pin-sharp, which gives me confidence to continue experimenting handheld.

## Lens swap

At this point, I decide it's time to swap lenses and attach the Zeiss Batis 85mm f/1.8 to get a bit more reach. The extra few stops this lens offers, combined with my increased sensitivity setting of

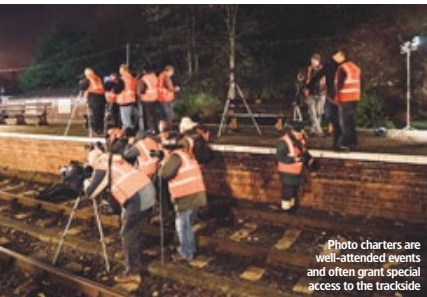


Photo charters are well-attended events and often grant special access to the trackside

## Steam charters for photographers

STEAM photo charter events like the one I attended are arranged for photographers, by like-minded photographers who want to capture accurate recreations of railway scenes from a bygone age. Locomotives, goods wagons, carriages, historic vehicles and railwaymen all dressed in appropriate clothing are arranged to help set the scene. Exclusive track access, and in the case of a

night shoot, additional lighting, will be arranged to get the best shots possible at the location. Most charters have a limited number of spaces, so book early to avoid disappointment. You'll need to pay £30-£35 for an evening charter and £75 for a full day. For more information and to view more examples, visit [www.flickr.com/groups/30742charters/pool](http://www.flickr.com/groups/30742charters/pool).



The 5-axis image-stabilisation system was used in conjunction with a sensitivity setting of ISO 25,600 to capture this handheld shot, taken at 1/40sec

ISO 12,800, helps to achieve a 1/125sec shutter speed that's just about fast enough to freeze an engine driver walking down the platform carrying an oil lamp. This shot gets me thinking. Would it be possible to freeze a moving train in low light using nothing but a fast aperture and high-sensitivity setting? Keeping the ISO set to 12,800, I give it a try. Opting to use my wider Zeiss Batis 25mm f/2 so I can squeeze more of what's around me in the frame, I compose my shot in the portrait orientation as a train duly approaches. The spot I'm shooting from is much darker, yet with the artificial lighting from the earlier scene I'm able to achieve a 1/60sec shutter speed at ISO 12,800 shooting wide open at f/2. The image turns out to be my favourite of the night (see image top left, page 54), and I use the menu button in playback mode to protect it. Walking to the next scene, I'm thrilled to have contained the atmosphere and the mood of the scene within my shot.

What with it getting much colder and rain droplets starting to play

havoc on the front element of the lens, I decide to do what others have already done and call it a night. Retreating back to the comfort of my local B&B, I reward myself with a warming brew and

begin backing up my shots. Glancing at the filter with Adobe Bridge reveals that of the 300 shots taken during the evening, more than 75% were taken at ISO 800 or above, with more than

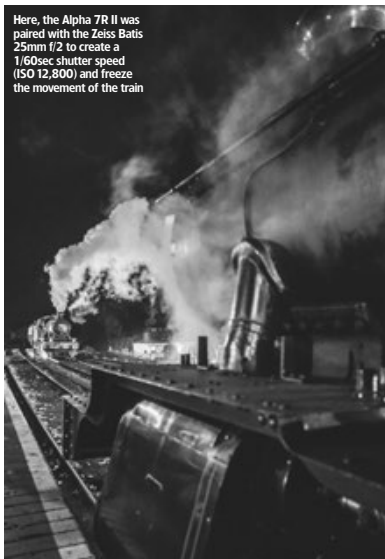
100 captured at ISO 6,400 or higher. As I start editing my raw files in Lightroom, it's apparent that the shots taken in the early part of the evening at ISO 800 are clean and free from



To capture these station signs, a 1/8sec shutter speed was used with a sensitivity of ISO 6,400



Here, the Alpha 7R II was paired with the Zeiss Batis 25mm f/2 to create a 1/60sec shutter speed (ISO 12,800) and freeze the movement of the train



No noise reduction

Noise reduction applied in Lightroom

luminance noise, and don't require any noise reduction. The difference between ISO 800 and ISO 1,600 is marginal, but with luminance noise just starting to creep in I find that increasing the luminance slider to a value of 15 helps a little.

Most of the shots that evening were taken between ISO 3,200 and ISO 6,400. Although luminance noise is evident at these settings, it's of such a fine texture that you only notice it when inspecting an image closely at high magnification.

By increasing the luminance slider to values of 30 and 45 respectively, it brings it under control without compromising on detail or giving the image the waxy appearance we often associate with noise reduction that's automatically applied to images taken in the JPEG file format. A closer examination of shots taken at ISO 12,800 reveals the sensor controls colour noise well, and I found there's no need to increase the colour noise slider beyond its default setting of 25 to counteract it.

A purple tint starts to appear in the darkest shadow areas at

ISO 12,800, but it's not severe enough to put you off using this sensitivity when shooting conditions insist. This purple tint becomes more obvious in the shadows at ISO 25,600, but I found this could be corrected

easily in my images by reducing the purple and magenta saturation from 0 to -80 from the HSL/Color/B&W tab. The level of detail the Alpha 7R II's sensor is capable of resolving at ISO 25,600 is phenomenal, and

having produced more than one acceptable image at this setting I would willingly use it again in any low-light situation.

When I reviewed the Alpha 7R II last year I was impressed, but this field test has made me appreciate a



This was one of the last shots taken before heavy rain brought an end to the evening shoot

Luminance noise starts to creep in at ISO 1,600, but it's easily removed when editing in Lightroom



different side to the camera. It's not just out to appeal to those who are after ultra-high resolution, as it's also out to target those who'd like stellar ISO performance. In hindsight, I could have installed Sony's PlayMemories app on my iPhone to control the shutter via Wi-Fi instead of using the camera's self-timer, but this is a lesson learned.

It's not until you push a camera to its limits that you really start to become aware of what is possible. For the Alpha 7R II to put in such an astonishing image-quality performance is testament to its superb back-illuminated Exmor R CMOS sensor. The high resolution, wide dynamic range and incredible response in low light combine to create what I have come to fully appreciate is the finest full-frame sensor available on the market.

Of course, it's not just the sensor that makes the Alpha 7R II the great camera it is – it's the way it merges its features together that's so impressive. The superb 5-axis stabilisation system plays a big role, too. In the case of this field test I couldn't have got away with

**It's apparent that the shots taken in the early part of the evening at ISO 800 are clean and free from luminance noise'**

shooting handheld without the aid of the 5-axis image stabilisation system, which gave me the advantage of being able to work more freely than others around me who constantly seemed to be tripping over or knocking into other people's tripods.

### Conclusion

To summarise, the Alpha 7R II has yet again exceeded my expectations and then some. Each time I use it I find that it offers something new or beneficial to my photography, whether it's a tilting screen or an outstanding low-light performance. The Alpha 7R II really is one of the finest full-frame cameras around that money can buy for under £2,600.



## Focal points

The Alpha 7R II provides all the sophisticated controls a serious photographer could ever want

### PlayMemories

Sony's app download service lets users add new functions to the Alpha 7R II. There are apps for photo and movie effects, as well as others that allow your smartphone to function as the camera's remote control.

### Customisation

The Alpha 7R II allows you to set the camera's buttons and dials as you'd like them. To make a change, simply head to the custom key settings option, which is located in the main menu.

### Durable shutter

The Alpha 7R II's shutter is tested to 500,000 cycles and features a braking mechanism that's designed to cut mechanical front and rear curtain vibration by up to 50%.



### Battery

A pair of rechargeable NP-FW50 batteries – the same as those used in the Sony Alpha 7R, 7 II and 7S – are supplied with the Alpha 7R II. They're rated for 290 shots each when the EVF is used and 340 shots when users opt to use the screen. Extra batteries cost £65 each.

### Memory card

The Sony Alpha 7R II has a single memory card slot at the side. SDXC memory cards with a Class 10 or higher speed rating are required for XAVC S recording, and UHS Speed Class 3 is required for recording at 100Mbps.





To achieve pin-sharp results, you'll want to put your camera's manual focus assist settings to good use. For this shot, focus peaking and a magnified screen view were used

## Samyang 21mm f/1.4 ED AS UMC CS



**Michael Topham** samples Samyang's latest manual-focus prime lens, which is designed with today's mirrorless users in mind

**T**he growing number of mirrorless models on the market has seen a gradual rise in the number of third-party lenses produced for smaller system cameras. Samyang is one of the latest manufacturers to add a pair of lenses to its mirrorless line-up and we've recently taken delivery of the 21mm f/1.4 ED AS UMC CS and the 50mm f/1.2 AS UMC CS. Both lenses are compatible with Canon EF-M, Fujifilm X, Micro Four Thirds and Sony E mounts, and in this test we're focusing on the wider of the two. Designed for those who'll appreciate its fast aperture and wide focal length, the 21mm f/1.4 ED AS UMC CS shares the same optical design as Samyang's 21mm T1.5 ED AS UMC CS. The latter is squarely aimed at video users and differs slightly from the lens we're looking at here in the way it features a de-clicked aperture ring for silent operation,

as well as a distance scale and T numbers on both sides of the lens. Mounted to a mirrorless camera featuring an APS-C-sized sensor, the 21mm f/1.4 is equivalent to 31.5mm, whereas it's comparable to a 42mm fixed lens attached to a Micro Four Thirds body. Before examining our lab results, let's first familiarise ourselves with the key features.

### Features

Whereas the Samyang 50mm f/1.2 ED AS UMC CS conceals an optical construction of nine elements in seven groups, this wider 21mm f/1.4 lens features an arrangement of eight elements in seven groups. It has a nine-blade aperture to ensure out-of-focus points of light (or bokeh) are rendered circular, and the ED and AS abbreviations in its name reveal it benefits from an extra-low dispersion lens and as many as three aspherical lenses to

minimise colour aberrations and ensure high contrast across the frame at all apertures. On top of this, Samyang has implemented its ultra multi coating (UMC) technology to abolish any effects of flare and ghosting.

The key difference between this optic and other lenses for mirrorless cameras is that it is manual focus only and features no optical stabilisation. There are no metal contacts at the rear of the mount to form an electronic connection between the camera and lens, either, meaning the Exif data recorded by the camera won't offer any information about the focal length or aperture used. Those who regularly use filters will appreciate the internal focusing system that prevents the front element from extending or rotating when the manual-focus ring is rotated. Users who plan to screw in filters or adapter rings can do so via the lens's 58mm filter thread. Another key point to note is the lens's ability to focus within 28cm of a subject when working closely.

### Build and handling

Smaller and lighter than Samyang's DSLR lenses, 21mm f/1.4 upholds a strong and solid



Our review sample was supplied in X-mount and was paired with Fujifilm's X-T10 for the purpose of our test

build quality, which implies it'll endure frequent use and is built to last. The anodised red ring synonymous with Samyang lenses is found towards the rear of the barrel between the manual-focus and aperture rings. I would have preferred it if both of these were rubberised, but then again I had no complaints with the finely grooved surface of both rings, which provided sufficient grip throughout my testing. As is to be expected from a manual-focus lens, there's not a single button or switch in sight. The manual-focus ring offers a pleasing fluid motion that's consistently smooth across the focus range, while the aperture ring clicks and notches into place as it's rotated.

There's a half-stop adjustment between the aperture settings, which are printed on the barrel rather than engraved, and the plastic petal-shaped lens hood is clearly marked with a white dot to help align it with the lens.

### Image quality

The lens backs up its robust build with impressive image quality. The edges of images appear very slightly softer than the centre at  $f/1.4$ , but there's an increase in sharpness, both in the centre and at the edge, at  $f/2$  and  $f/2.8$  to where it plateaus between  $f/3.5$  and  $f/5.6$ . The best balance between centre and corner sharpness is recorded at  $f/5.6$ , and it's only when the lens is stopped down beyond  $f/11$  to the smaller apertures of  $f/16$  and  $f/22$  that the introduction of diffraction starts to take its toll on sharpness. Corner shading is apparent when the lens is used at its widest aperture, but it quickly starts to disappear when the lens is closed towards  $f/2.8$ . Our distortion chart flagged up minor barrel distortion, but as my real-world images revealed you'd be hard pressed to notice it and therefore it shouldn't be of concern. Chromatic aberrations are well controlled too, with only minor purple fringes of colour appearing along high-contrast edges when shooting towards the sun.



## Our verdict

WHEN you consider the quality of its build, the quality of the images it produces and its reasonable price, there's a lot to like about the Samyang 21mm  $f/1.4$  ED AS UMC CS. Whether it makes a great buy for you will depend a lot on the type of images you like to take. For action or spur-of-the-moment shots where instantaneous focus is key, you may struggle to find optimum focus fast enough and it's in these types of situations you want your lens to support autofocus. If, however, you regularly take shots of stationary subjects, lock your camera off on a tripod or generally find that you have time to refine your focus settings manually before committing to firing the shutter, this lens makes a very strong case for itself.

There's a delightful depth to images at  $f/1.4$ , which is particularly pleasing on the eye. The fast aperture also comes into its own when you're in need of a few extra stops in low light. If you'd like an wideangle prime, albeit a manual-focus one, and you're working to a sub-£300 budget, you can't go far wrong with the Samyang 21mm  $f/1.4$  ED AS UMC CS.



### Data file

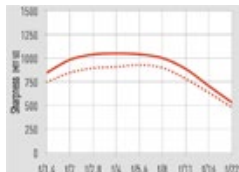
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Lens elements 8  
Groups 7  
Aperture  $f/1.4$ - $f/22$   
Minimum focus 28cm  
Length 67.9mm  
Diameter 54.3mm  
Weight 290g



## Samyang 21mm $f/1.4$ ED AS UMC CS

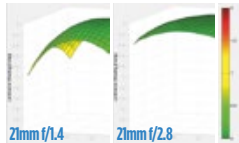
### Resolution

The resolution of this lens is extremely impressive as is clearly illustrated in our Applied Imaging tests. The graph tells us the sharpness in the centre at  $f/1.4$  is excellent and only gets better when it's closed to  $f/5.6$ . Users can be confident of closing the lens down to  $f/11$  when needed. Beyond  $f/11$  the centre and corner sharpness drops due to the introduction of diffraction, so it's recommended to avoid  $f/16$  and  $f/22$  when it's possible to do so.



### Shading

The key attraction of this lens is its fast aperture and users will find themselves exploiting it to create an extremely shallow depth of field. Corners appear approximately 1EV darker than the centre of the frame at  $f/1.4$ . Stopping the lens down to  $f/2$  sees an immediate improvement and by the time you reach  $f/2.8$  all traces of vignetting disappear.



### Curvilinear distortion

The lens puts in a superb performance when it comes to rendering straight lines. Those who want an entirely distortion-free image will do best to install and use a ready-made lens profile rather than attempting to remove it manually, which could increase the risk of introducing pincushion distortion.



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## A question of priorities

**Q** After ten years with my trusty old Canon EOS 5D, I have recently updated to the EOS 6D, taking advantage of the January sales. It's an amazing camera and a big upgrade, but a few things are confusing me.

One setting I'm trying to understand is 'highlight tone priority'. Canon seems to be saying that if I turn this on, I'll magically get more highlight detail. This sounds great, as I often used to have to underexpose pictures by a stop or so to avoid losing details, then adjust them back when processing from raw.

Does it work in this way, and are there any disadvantages to turning it on all the time?

**Anthony Templeton**

**A** Canon's 'highlight tone priority' (HTP) setting does indeed work, and normally gives precisely 1 stop more highlight detail in JPEG and raw. In effect, it's automating the process you describe; underexposing by a stop to hold highlight detail, then bringing the midtones back up in processing.

Because this is essentially pushing the sensitivity by 1 stop, the lowest you can use is limited to ISO 200. In other words, shooting at ISO 200 with HTP enabled is identical to shooting at ISO 100 with a stop underexposure and adjusting post-processing.

The main disadvantage of this approach is that not all

raw converters are capable of understanding what's going on, so may not show the additional highlight detail by default when they open your raw images. But it will still be there in your files; it might just need the highlight development settings adjusting to reveal it. **Andy Westlake**

## Canon replacement

**Q** I'm currently using a Canon EOS 5D Mark III, but I'm half-tempted to buy a Canon EOS 6D as a back-up and secondary DSLR. The best price I can find for the body new is £1,099, and the only thing holding me back is a rumour that an EOS 6D Mark II might be on the way later this year. Should I wait or should I buy? **Jim Hutchinson**

**A** If I were you, I'd be asking myself: 'How important is it for me to own a second full-frame DSLR?' If you were shooting an event where failure isn't an option, we'd always recommend taking a second body as insurance should one camera fail. But it's hard to justify spending over £1,000 on a second full-frame camera if it's only going to sit in your bag and rarely see the light of day. Instead, this money could be put towards a new lens or flashgun.

Rumours did circulate last year that an EOS 6D Mark II could be on the way in 2016. In the past, we've seen Canon release new cameras from the top down, with each camera being given the chance to sell before cheaper alternatives are offered.

If Canon continues this trend, we'll more than likely see a replacement for the EOS 5D Mark III arrive before the EOS 6D Mark II. If this were the case, an option may be to hold on to your EOS 5D Mark III and retire it as your second camera, then upgrade to a newer model if your budget allows. **Michael Topham**



The new Fujifilm X-Pro2 combines ISO control with the shutter-speed dial

## X-Pro2 ISO control

**Q** I thoroughly enjoyed reading the first look of the new Fujifilm X-Pro2 (AP 23 January). I have been an X-Pro1 user for three years now, and have been patiently waiting to see how Fujifilm might develop it for the better. I'm glad to see a new ISO dial on the body, but I have read elsewhere that this is at the loss of being able to change the sensitivity from the quick menu. Is this correct? **Duncan Kennedy**

**A** When we visited Fujifilm for the launch of the X-Pro2, the manufacturer was keen to stress that the improvements that have been made to the camera are based on constructive feedback from X-Pro1 users. When we reviewed the X-Pro1, we noted that it would be good if Fujifilm could somehow incorporate ISO control via the body and it seems we've had this wish granted on the X-Pro2.

Due to the lack of space on the top-plate, Fujifilm has decided to merge ISO control with the shutter-speed dial. To operate the latter you simply turn the dial as usual, but to change the ISO you're required to lift and turn the dial.

You're correct in saying that ISO control has been removed from the quick menu, and existing X-Pro1 users may find it takes some time to get used to this change. During my hands-on experience with the camera, there were a few times when I found myself adjusting the shutter speed because I hadn't lifted the ISO dial high enough. I think, in retrospect, it would have been good if Fujifilm had added a 'Q' setting so users could override the ISO dial and adjust the sensitivity via the traditional method of using quick menu if they'd prefer.

We're hopeful that our review sample of the X-Pro2 will arrive in the next few weeks, so we'll be bringing you our full report very soon.

**Michael Topham**

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# In the bag

Steve Morgan offers his choice of kit for location portraiture shoots.  
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BLAST FROM THE PAST

## Canon EOS 5D Mark III

**1** Its accuracy and quick focus make this my favourite body for location portraits, giving me confidence in capturing the changing light and expressions of the subject. The wide ISO range allows me to shoot in low-light conditions, with minimal camera shake and noise.

## Canon EF 85mm f/1.2L II USM

**2** This lens is brilliant for low-light portraits, allowing me to separate my subjects from distracting external elements and creating a smooth background bokeh. It has enabled me to shoot portraits I couldn't even contemplate using slower lenses.

## Canon EF 35mm f/1.4L

**3** This is a general-purpose lens: it's great for giving context in environmental portraiture by being wide enough to show the subject in their own surroundings while staying prominent in the frame. It is useful for industrial photography, namely for showing the workforce interacting with the plant, machinery and products.



## Canon Speedlite 580EX II

**4** In conjunction with lighting stands, mounts and brollies, triggered remotely by Skyport transmitter and receiver, these produce a versatile location flash system.

## Lastolite reflector

**5** This is small enough to hold with one hand to create fill-in for head shots, either outdoors to throw light onto the face or for portraits with window light to lessen contrast.

## Chamois leather

**6** This is my favourite cleaning cloth, but it must be used with caution. It's versatile and great for keeping the camera and lens dry in the rain, both as a cover and to wipe away excess moisture. But make sure it is clean and be careful when wiping the lens surface – best to wipe the protective UV filter!

## Filters

**7** I use Cokin graduated greys and circular polarising filters. The grads are useful in bringing down blown-out skies and creating drama with darkened skies when shooting location portraits with off-camera flash. The polariser can boost colour saturation and control reflections.

## List of kit

Blindchrom lighting stands, Canon Speedlite 580EX II, Canon Speedlite 580EX, Elinchrom Skyport wireless flash trigger, Lighting brollies, Stand adaptors for Speedlites, Canon EF 10-20mm f/2.8L, Canon EF 24-10mm f/2.8L, Canon EF 85mm f/1.2L, Canon EF 50mm f/1.4, Canon EF 35mm f/1.4L, Canon EF 20mm f/2.8, Canon extension tubes, Canon EOS 5D Mark III, Lastolite collapsible reflector, Spare CF cards, Chamois leather cloth, Cokin graduated grey filters, B+W 72mm polarisers, Alcohol lens-cleaning fluid, Blower brush, Small foldable tripod stand

# Houghton Ensignette

Ivor Matanle recalls the first all-metal British camera

**LAUNCHED** Ensignette 1 1909, Ensignette 2 1912

**PRICE AT LAUNCH** Ensignette 1 30s (£1.50), Ensignette 2 50s (£2.50)

**GUIDE PRICE TODAY** Ensignette 1 about £50, Ensignette 2 £55-£75

THE ENSIGNETTE was launched in 1909 as the first all-metal British camera and took six 1.5x2.25in exposures on a new size of paper-backed rollfilm, also made by Houghton, called the E1. The Ensignette 1 (above) sold so well that other film manufacturers climbed on the bandwagon, with the Barnet and Selo brands calling the size No 28 and Kodak launching the 128.

Initially, there were two models, one with a fixed-focus f/11 meniscus lens for 30s (£1.50), the other with an f/5.6 Ensign Anastigmat at 70s (£3.50). Within months, the range was augmented by the Ensignette 1b with an f/5.6 Cooke Anastigmat and the Ensignette 1g with an f/6.8 Goerz Syntor lens.

In 1912, Houghton announced the larger Ensignette 2 for 50s (£2.50) with an f/11 achromatic lens. This provided six exposures 3x2in on another new Houghton film size, 2E, which cost 1s (5p) a roll. Over the next couple of years, more expensive versions of the Ensignette 2 were offered with better lenses, and in 1914 a fully focusing version of the Ensignette 1b became available.

**What's good** Easy choice of shooting apertures.

**What's bad** Film supply ceased before the Second World War.

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**Professor Newman on...**

# Sensor and sensibility

Professor Bob Newman looks at Nikon's new D cameras and asks, 'Who made the sensors?'

**N**ikon has introduced an interesting pair of cameras in the D5 and D500. The brand has a history of shopping around for its sensors, so it is quite natural that with any release from this company, there will be a flurry of speculation over the sensor source.

A Nikon representative is on record as saying that the two sensors share the same architecture, which some have taken to mean that the manufacturer is the same.

The D5 sensor seemingly originates from the same design team that produced the D4 and D3 sensors before it. Design teams have a tendency to establish their own practice, and so will develop products that have common features, both at a microscopic and macroscopic level. The common features between this new sensor and the older ones are quite apparent.

At the same time, from an exterior view, it seems these sensors have features that Nikon's own have not previously had – most interestingly, a column-parallel analogue-to-digital converter of the type that gives other manufacturers' sensors, including Sony's, exceptional performance with respect to characteristics such as dynamic range.

It is more likely that Nikon has acquired this piece of intellectual property rather than developing it from scratch. In the past, converters such as this have required some years of continuous development to reach the very best levels of performance, which is surely what Nikon would demand for its flagship model. Speculation remains as to the original



The sensors of the D5 (above) and D4 (left) have some family similarities, although apparently different 'architectures'

**'It is quite natural that with any release from this company, there will be a flurry of speculation over the sensor source'**

source of the property.

The D500 sensor, meanwhile, is completely different from that of the D5 and, to my eyes, it clearly emanates from a different design team. Since the sensor does not match the specification of any existing commodity part, determining its likely source requires a little detective work.

Nikon has not yet released the usual front-on sensor photograph for this camera. It has, however, released an arty side-on view, and, looking at this, I find that the sensor it matches most closely is the 1in sensor in the Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 Mark IV. This sensor is a back-illuminated stacked unit. A stacked sensor is one that's

constructed from a 'stack' of two or more chips that are piled up rather like a stack of breakfast pancakes. The top chip provides the pixel array, while lower chips provide the peripheral circuitry.

There are a number of advantages to this construction, but perhaps the major one is that each chip can be optimised for the purpose that it serves, providing faster read-out, among other attributes. If this does indeed prove to be a stacked sensor, it will be the first at APS-C size (advanced photo system type-C) in a consumer camera – although Sony has already put such a sensor in one of its cinema cameras.

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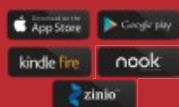


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**CUSTOMER REVIEW: EOS 70D + 18-135mm IS STM**  
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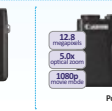
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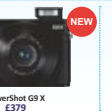
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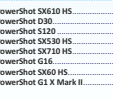
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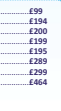
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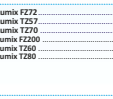
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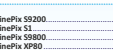
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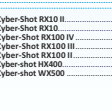
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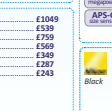
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PGI550 Black 1xmi

CL151 Cyan 9xmi

CL151 Magenta 9xmi

PGI550/CL151 Set of 5

PGI550 Black 1xmi

CL151 Cyan 9xmi

CL151 Magenta 9xmi

PGI550/CL151 Set of 5

PGI550 Black 1xmi

CL151 Cyan 9xmi

CL151 Magenta 9xmi

PGI550/CL151 Set of 5

PGI550 Black 1xmi

CL151 Cyan 9xmi

CL151 Magenta 9xmi

EPSON

No.16

Fountain Pen Inks

Originals: £229.99

Compatible: £119.99

No.16 Black 5xmi

No.16 Black 3xmi

No.16 Black 1xmi

No.16 Black 0.5xmi

No.16 Black 0.2xmi

No.16 Black 0.1xmi

No.16 Black 0.05xmi

No.16 Black 0.02xmi

No.16 Black 0.01xmi

No.16 Black 0.005xmi

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### Albums & Frames

We now stock a comprehensive range of frames, mounts, albums, and accessories. The full range can be viewed on our website, with detailed close-up images of each product to help you choose the perfect way to display your printed photographs. Below is just a tiny sample of what we offer:

Grace Albums Available in Burgundy or Blue

Travel Albums Over a dozen designs available in stock

Emilia Frames Distressed wood shabby chic effect. Black or White.

Rio Frames Handcrafted solid wood with 30mm wide profile. In four colours

Griffin Albums Available in Burgundy or Blue

Primo Frames Simple, basic design available in a huge range of sizes & colours

Baby Albums Multiple different designs available

Memo Style Albums: Frisco 6x4 100 photos £5.99, Frisco 7x5 seven colours £2.29, Frisco 8x6 seven colours £2.79, Frisco 10x8 seven colours £3.79, Frisco 12x8 seven colours £4.59, Frisco 14x8 seven colours £5.39, Frisco 16x8 seven colours £6.19, Frisco 18x8 seven colours £6.99, Frisco 20x8 seven colours £7.79, Frisco 22x8 seven colours £8.59, Frisco 24x8 seven colours £9.39, Frisco 26x8 seven colours £10.19, Frisco 28x8 seven colours £10.99, Frisco 30x8 seven colours £11.79, Frisco 32x8 seven colours £12.59, Frisco 34x8 seven colours £13.39, Frisco 36x8 seven colours £14.19, Frisco 38x8 seven colours £14.99, Frisco 40x8 seven colours £15.79, Frisco 42x8 seven colours £16.59, Frisco 44x8 seven colours £17.39, Frisco 46x8 seven colours £18.19, Frisco 48x8 seven colours £18.99, Frisco 50x8 seven colours £19.79, Frisco 52x8 seven colours £20.59, Frisco 54x8 seven colours £21.39, Frisco 56x8 seven colours £22.19, Frisco 58x8 seven colours £22.99, Frisco 60x8 seven colours £23.79, Frisco 62x8 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102mm £4.99

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110mm £4.99

113mm £4.99

115mm £4.99

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122mm £4.99

125mm £4.99

128mm £4.99

130mm £4.99

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136mm £4.99

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35mm f/1.4L USM £989.00	400mm f/5.6L IS MK II £6,899.00	24-105mm f/3.5-5.6 IS STM £375.00
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35mm f/2.8 IS USM £399.00	600mm f/4.0L IS MK II £8,895.00	EF-55-250mm f/4-5.6 IS STM £245.00
40mm f/2.8 IS USM £1,299.00	800mm f/5.6L IS USM £12,899.00	70-200mm f/2.8 IS USM £1,899.00
50mm f/1.2L USM £999.00	TS 17mm f/4.0L IS £1,179.00	70-200mm f/2.8L USM £1,899.00
50mm f/1.8 USM £107.00	TS 24mm f/3.5L II £1,479.00	70-200mm f/4.0L IS USM £865.00
50mm f/1.8 II USM £134.00	TS 45mm f/2.8L II £1,099.00	70-200mm f/4.0L IS USM £865.00
50mm f/1.8 STM £237.00	TS 90mm f/2.8L II £1,124.00	70-200mm f/4.0-5.6 IS £808.00
55mm f/2.8 Macro £237.00	8-15mm f/4.0L Fisheye USM £915.00	70-300mm f/4.0-5.6 IS USM £904.00
55mm f/1.8 Macro £237.00	EF-5 10-18mm IS STM £189.00	70-300mm DO IS USM £1,118.00
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65mm f/1.2L II USM £2,377.00	EF-11-22mm f/4L USM £2,799.00	70-300mm f/4.0-5.6 II £1,189.00
100mm f/2.8 USM £358.00	EF-15-45mm f/3.5-5.6 IS £531.00	100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 II USM £1,899.00
100mm f/2.8 Macro £399.00	16-35mm f/2.8L II USM £1,064.00	200-400mm f/4.0L USM £8,596.00
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AF-D 14mm f/2.8D £1,209.00	AF-S 85mm f/1.8G £1,439.00	AF-S 16-80mm f/2.8-4E ED VR £869.00
AF-D 16mm f/2.8D Fisheye £625.00	AF-S 85mm f/1.4G £1,149.00	AF-S 16-85mm f/3.5-5.6G £429.00
AF-S 20mm f/1.8E £629.00	AF-S 105mm f/2.8G VR £1,619.00	AF-S 17-35mm f/2.8 ED £1,499.00
AF-D 20mm f/2.8 £369.00	AF-DC 105mm f/2.8 Nikkor £1,805.00	AF-S 17-55mm f/2.8G ED £979.00
AF-S Nikkor 24mm f/1.4G £1,379.00	AF-D 135mm f/2.8D £1,029.00	AF-S 18-35mm f/3.5-5.6G £519.00
AF-S 24mm f/1.4G £1,245.00	AF-D 180mm f/2.8 IF ED £695.00	AF-S 18-105mm VR £2,024.00
AF-S 28mm f/1.8G £1,495.00	AF-D 200mm f/4D IF £459.00	AF-S 18-140mm ED VR £459.00
AF-S 35mm f/1.4G £1,295.00	AF-S 200mm f/2.8G VR £1,409.00	AF-S 18-200mm ED VR £569.00
35mm AF-AF Nikkor D £255.00	AF-S 300mm f/4.0D VR £1,399.00	AF-S 18-300mm f/3.5-5.6 VR £549.00
AF-S 50mm f/1.8G ED £1,429.00	AF-S 300mm f/4E PF ED VR £1,639.00	AF-S 24-70mm f/2.8E ED £1,199.00
AF-S 50mm f/1.4G £1,749.00	AF-S 400mm f/2.8G VR £6,309.00	AF-S 24-85mm VR £399.00
AF-S 60mm f/2.8G ED £1,185.00	AF-S 500mm f/4G VR £5,849.00	AF-S 28-300mm ED VR £659.00
AF-S 50mm f/1.4G £1,224.00	AF-S 500mm f/4E FL ED VR £8,149.00	AF-S 55-200mm f/4.5-5.6 VR £229.00
AF-S 50mm f/1.8G £1,149.00	AF-S 600mm f/4G ED VR £6,899.99	AF-S 55-250mm f/4.5-5.6 VR £1,579.00
AF-D 50mm f/1.8 £1,109.00	AF-S 600mm f/4E FL ED VR £9,649.00	AF-S 70-200mm f/4.0D ED VR £899.00
AF-S 50mm f/1.4G £1,419.00	800mm f/5.6E VR £11,994.00	AF-S 70-300mm f/4.0D VR £1,406.00
AF-S 105mm f/3.5G £1,135.00	AF-S 10-24mm f/3.5-5.6 £2,639.00	AF-D 80-400mm ED VR £939.00
AF-D 60mm f/2.8 Micro £364.00	AF-S 12-24mm f/4G £1,859.00	AF-S 80-400mm ED VR £1,799.00
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**+28-70mm**

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4K 12 FPS 3.5" TOUCH

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	24-70mm f/4E Vario-Tessar T* £805.00	24-70mm f/4E Vario-Tessar T* £805.00		50mm f/1.4 Carl Zeiss T* £1,099.00
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	55mm f/1.8 Sonnar T* ZA £69.00	28-70mm f/3.5-5.6 FE OSS £449.00		16-50mm f/2.8 Carl Zeiss T* £1,399.00
	90mm f/2.8 Macro G FE OSS £1,899.00	28-135mm f/4G FE G FE OSS £1,899.00		24-70mm f/2.8 S.D. Carl Zeiss T* £1,799.00
	100mm f/2.8 Macro G FE OSS £2,199.00	55-210mm f/4.5-6.3 G OSS £599.00		55-210mm f/4.5-6.3 G OSS £599.00
	16-50mm f/3.5-5.6 OSS £259.00	70-200mm f/4G G FE OSS £999.00		70-200mm f/2.8 S.D. Carl Zeiss T* £2,199.00

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**Panasonic LUMIX GH4**

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\*Price includes £100 cashback from Panasonic. Ends 30.03.16

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Body only **£704.00** + 14-42mm **£829.00**

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**Leica T (typ 701)**

16.5 MEGA PIXELS 10 FPS 15 HD

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 105mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM **£329.00**  
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16mm F2.8 S.4.0 O.S. Xs	E++ E179 - E270	10.2mm F3.5-4.5 D II Lf AF Tachon	E++ E240	0301 Body Only	As Seen / E++ E280	Packaging Black / Tan.	E++ E240
16mm F2.8 S.4.0 O.S. Xs	E++ E240	10.2mm F2.8 AF 1/35 AF SP Tachon	E++ E240	0400 1/35-160 F.0.0	E++ E240		
16mm F2.8 S.4.0 Xs	E++ Mini-E279 - E270	14mm F2.8 USM	E++ E240	0500 Body Only	E++ E239, E240	Crumpler Camera Gigolo	E++ E45
16mm F2.8 VR	E++ E179	14mm F2.8 L USM	E++ Mini-E109 - E120	0600 Body Only	E++ E170	Jenaphot 1500.	E++ E45
20mm F1.4 45° AF VR	Mini-E240	16.5mm F2.8 USM Macro	Mini-E240	0700 Body Only	E++ E180	Multi Top 7000	E++ E25
20mm F1.4 45° AF VR	E++ E179	16.5mm F2.8 Macro Pro DX Tokina	E++ E240	0800 Body Only	E++ E240	Proby Ray 5000 (UK) - Black	E++ E25
20mm F1.4 45° AF VR	E++ Unused E179	17.4mm F4 USM	Exc E++ E281 - E230	0900 Body Only	E++ E159		
25mm F1.8 T.2.8 Xs	Mini-E259 - E380	17.4mm F2.8 D II Tachon	E++ E159	1000 Body Only	E++ E170	Kata CC191 Hologram	E++ E49
25mm F1.4 45° AF VR	E++ E229 - E270	17.4mm F2.8 D II S Tamron	E++ E159	1100 Body Only	E++ E170	ESR optical Body - 1/280	E++ E49
28mm F2.8 S.4.0 Xs	Mini-E259 - E380	20mm F2.8 AF 1/35 AF SP Tachon	E++ E240	1200 Body Only	E++ E170		
30mm F2.8 VR Macro	E++ Mini-E229 - E280	20mm F2.8 S.5.5 S Tamron	E++ E229				

### Micro 4/3rds Lenses -

Arconics 7.14mm F4 G Vario	Mnt-E478	18.05mm F3.5-6.6 EPS II	E++ E179	D700 Body + MB-D10 Gp.	E++ E180	S312 Sling Bag	Unused E15
Arconics 7.3 F45a Flycatcher	Mnt-E479	18.05mm F3.5-6.6 STM	E++ E179	D700 Body Only	E++ E180		
12.5mm F2.8 1/4 S4.5 O/S G	E++ E179	18mm F3.5-6.2 Zens	Mnt-E480	D700 Body Only	E++ E180	Lowepro CleanShot 160AW	E++ E228
12.5mm F2.8 G Vario O/S HD	E++ E519	21mm F2.8 Zens	E++ Mnt-E479-E179	D700 Body Only	Mnt-E181	Classified 250 AW F2.8	E++ E228
12.5mm F2.8 G V2	E++ Mnt-E480	22mm F2.8 STM		D80 Body Only	E++ E180	Elite AW - Black	E++ E126-E129
14.4mm F3.5-5.6 APS II	Mnt-E179	24-105mm F4.1 S.I. STM	E++ E179-E480-E126	D800 Body Only	E++ E180-E179	E140 HD 14.4mm BG - Black	E++ E126-E129
14.4mm F4.5-6.3 O/S HD	E++ E219-E428	24-105mm F3.5-5.6 Aq Tarron	E++ E149	800D Body Only	E++ E126	Lens Trekker	E++ E180
14.4mm F3.5-5.6 APS II Vario	E++ E179-E179	24-70mm F2.8 STM	E++ E088	D800 Body Only	E++ E179-E179	Novus 3 - Forest Green	E++ E180
35-100mm F2.8 G O/S HD	E++ E079	24-70mm F2.8 STM II	Mnt-E181			Onion Beep Pack	E++ E120
15.5mm F2.8 1/4 S4.5 O/S	Mnt-E480	24-70mm F4.1 S.I. STM	E++ Mnt-E480-E126	Olympus E310 Body Only	E++ E288	Onion Beep Pack	E++ E120
15.5mm F4.5-6.3 APS O/S HD	E++ E1109-E1109	24-70mm F3.5-4.5 USM	E++ E128	6110 + 14.2mm	E++ E288	Onion II Pack	E++ E120
40-75mm F4.5-6.3 APS Vario PZ	E++ E109	24mm F4.1 U.S.	Mnt-E089	6110 + 10.50mm	E++ E119	Onion Trekker	E++ E145
62-200mm F4.5-6.3 APS Vario	E++ E109	24mm F2.8 USM	E++ E119	6120 + 14.2mm	E++ E149	Race 160AW - Black	E++ E119
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Olympus 12-40mm F2.8 M.Z. Ko	E++ E139	28mm F3.5 S.I. USM II	Mnt-E109	6120 + 14.2mm	E++ E149	Urban Repro	E++ E239
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12.5mm F2.8 M.Z. Ko	Mnt-E139-E479	35-100mm F3.5-6.3 X-10 VC Tarron	E++ E279		E++ E179	<b>Lozin M</b>	
14.4mm F3.5-5.6 E2 M.Z. Ko	Mnt-E129	29-70mm F2.8 X-10 Tarron	Mnt-E229	6500 Body + HD S-Grip	E++ E179	M3 Body Black Only	Mnt-E419
17mm F2.8 M.Z. Ko Silver	Mnt-E279	45-150mm F2.8 ATX Pro Takina	E++ E119	6520 + 14.2mm + 40-150mm	E++ E239	M3 Chrome Body Only	Mnt-E489
17mm F2.8 M.Z. Ko - Black		28-400mm F2.8-4.1 USM	E++ E149	6520 + 14.2mm + HDLS Grip	E++ E239	M3 Chrome F1.4 Aqf Edn Edition Set	Mnt-E489
15.5mm F2.8 F2.8 Zuko Pro	Mnt-E049-E899	28-400mm F3.5-5.6 EPS II	E++ E149	6520 + 14.2mm + 40-150mm	E++ E249	M35mm F1.4 Aqf Edn Edition Set	E++ Mnt-E060-E389
17mm F1.8 M.Z. Zuko + LHSD HD	E++ E139	Exc/E++ E649-E126				Monochrome Body Only (Type 348) - Black Chrome	Mnt-E485
M14-1.4 Teleconverter	Mnt-E219-E229	28mm F2.8 EF	E++ E99			M2040 (Black) Body Only	E++ E126-E439
7.5mm F3.5 Flycatcher Sampling	E++ E189	28mm F2.8 S USM + Hood	Mnt-E279	Sony S11 Mntel + 105mm F2.8 EX	Mnt-E349	M2400 (Black) Body Only	E++ E126-E439
Compos 17mm Transformer Lens	E++ E179	35-100mm F3.5-4.5 M.Z.	E++ E449	Sony S11 Mntel + 17.05mm F2.8 Pch O.D. OCS	Mnt-E349	M2400 (Black) Body Only	E++ E126-E439
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16-50mm F2.8 DT SSM Sony.	E+ E269		
16-50mm F3.5-5.6 DT Sony.	E+ / E++ E269- E289		
18-200mm F3.5-6.3 DT Minolta.	E+ / E+ E39- E139		
18-50mm F3.5-5.6 SAM Sony.	E+ / E+ E49- E59		
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20-35mm F3.5-4.5 AF Minolta.	E++ E129		
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24-70mm F2.8 ZA SSM Sony.	E++ / Mini E449- E459		
24mm F2.8 AF Minolta.	E+ E149		
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28-105mm F3.5-5.6 AF Tokina.	Unsold E49		
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28-105mm F3.5-6.3 Di Minolta.	E+ / E++ E29		
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30mm F2.8 SAM Macro Sony.	E+ E95		
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35-105mm F3.5-5.6 AF Minolta.	E+ E25		
35mm F1.4 G Sony.	Mini E799		
35mm F1.0 DT SAM Sony.	E+ E109		
50mm F1.4 AF Minolta.	E+ E149		
50mm F1.4 AF Sony.	E+ / E++ E149- E179		
50mm F1.7 AF Minolta.	As Seen / E+ E45- E55		
50mm F2.8 AF Macro Minolta.	E+ E119		
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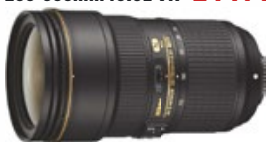
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# Final Analysis

**Roger Hicks considers...**

'Teheran', 2011, by Newsha Tavakolian

**T**he more we look at pictures, the more we see in them. I sometimes feel guilty when I walk into an exhibition in Arles, France, glance around it, and then walk out again without paying further attention. I reflect upon the difference between pictures with impact and pictures with staying power. But, increasingly, I suspect that the best pictures have both.

We have all seen pictures where our immediate reaction is 'Wow!' but where that reaction rapidly fades. It may take a second or two, or several minutes, during which we try to analyse what is so great about the picture and find that, actually, there's not much. This is quite different. Aesthetically, it is disputable (although I'd still like to have it on my wall). Intellectually and emotionally – by which I mean the extent to which it reaches into my mind and soul – it is stunning.

Take away the box on this young woman's head, and it's barely a mediocre snapshot, although her facial expression and indeed her entire pose say a good deal. There is almost nothing that can be said about it technically, except the (entirely appropriate) selective focus and the suspicion that it was probably shot early in the morning. But that box... It is the most extraordinary expression of alienation. It means that her face, even though we can see it, is literally untouchable. It is a transparent burqa, another means of control and, yes, alienation. The all but deserted road, with the one parked car, the tower block



**'That box is the most extraordinary expression of alienation... it's a transparent burqa, another means of control'**

and the unclear signs and (presumably) figures in the background all reinforce our perception of a world unlike our own. Unless, perhaps, we live in Teheran, Iran. Everything is about the box.

Then we do a double back flip. Keep the box: change everything else. Another city – Bristol, Miami, Huddersfield, Lyon. Another young woman, this time dressed for a night on the town, or going to work, or buying the groceries. A faded high street full of charity shops; Victorian terraced

houses; a mock-Tudor suburb. Suddenly, we realise that the box is a *genius loci*, a spirit of place, but also of all places. The *genius loci* is us and our attitudes.

We all live in our own boxes, and so does everyone else. Normally, we don't think about how we relate to strangers: we just slide past them in essentially functional ways, handing over our money in the shop, dodging around them on the pavement, waiting for them to vacate their parking space. This picture disrupts all that.

With its literal box, it is not shocking in the usual gruesome sense, but it is deeply disruptive in the way that it illustrates how we treat one another. In that sense, it is certainly shocking.

A picture like this is not taken by accident. Even apart from making the box, keeping it in place and ensuring that her breath does not steam it up requires a lot of planning. Before the planning comes the idea.

I don't have ideas like this, at least when it comes to live models, although still lifes are a bit different. This is why I doff my hat to the photographer for showing me (and everyone else) a different vision.

STYLING: JANE BROWN; HAIR: TONYA TAYLOR; MAKEUP: JANE BROWN



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